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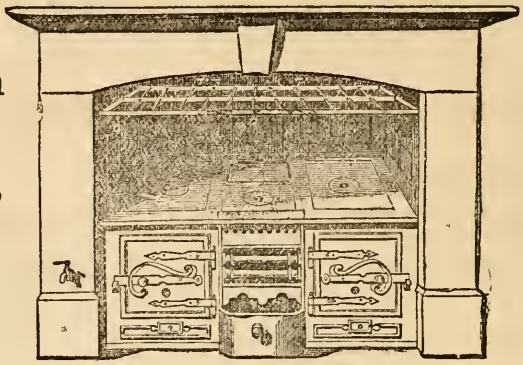

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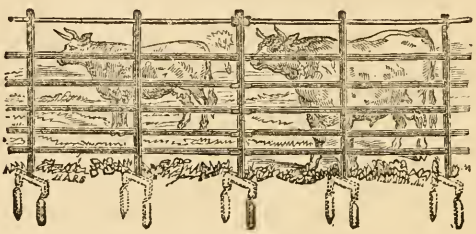

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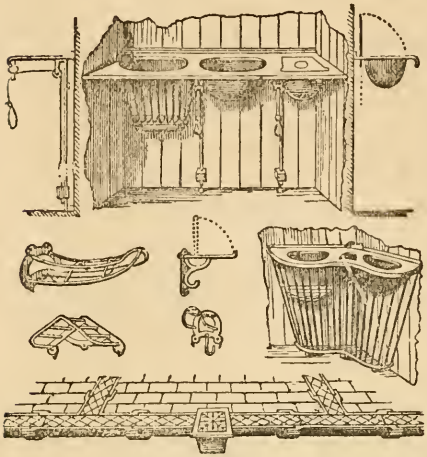

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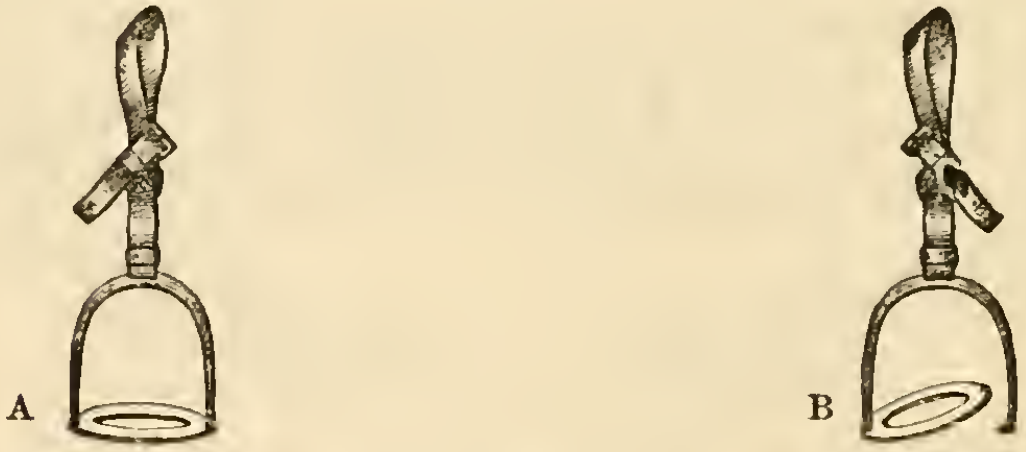


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# BAILY'S

## Monthly Magazine of Sports and Pastimes.

No. 216. FEBRUARY, 1878. Vol. XXXI.

Embellished with a Portrait of Lieut.-Colonel Edward Chaplin, M.P.

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LONDON: A. H. BAILY & Co., CORNHILL.
1878.

## DIARY FOR FEBRUARY, 1878.

| M. D. | W. D. | OCCURRENCES. |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | F | Partridge and Pheasant Shooting ends. |
| 2 | S | Spartan Harriers, Meet of. |
| 3 | S | Fourth Sunday after Epiphany. |
| 4 | M | South Staffordshire Steeplechases. |
| 5 | Tu | Streatham, South Staffordshire, and Carmarthen Steeplechases. |
| 6 | W | Carmarthen Steeplechases. |
| 7 | Th | Morhampton Coursing Meeting. |
| 8 | F | |
| 9 | S | |
| 10 | S | Fifth Sunday after Epiphany. |
| 11 | M | |
| 12 | Tu | Birmingham Steeplechases. South Essex Coursing Meeting. |
| 13 | W | |
| 14 | Th | Lincoln Hunt Steeplechases. |
| 15 | F | Sussex Club and Hereford Coursing Meetings. |
| 16 | S | South London Harriers, Meet of. |
| 17 | S | Septuagesima Sunday. |
| 18 | M | |
| 19 | Tu | Croydon, Doncaster, and Pytchley Hunt Steeplechases. |
| 20 | W | Croydon and Doncaster Hunt Steeplechases. Waterloo Cup Coursing Meeting. |
| 21 | Th | Moreton in the Marsh and Bromley Steeplechases. |
| 22 | F | Bromley Steeplechases. |
| 23 | S | Thames Hare and Hounds. |
| 24 | S | Sexagesima Sunday. |
| 25 | M | Ashdown Open Coursing Meeting. |
| 26 | Tu | Sandown Steeplechases. |
| 27 | W | Sandown Steeplechases. |
| 28 | Th | Streatham Steeplechases. Eslington Coursing Meeting. |

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Edward Chaplin

BAILY'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

OF

SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

## LIEUT.-COLONEL EDWARD CHAPLIN, M.P.

THE subject of our present sketch—formerly Master of the Blankney—is a son of the late Rev. Henry Chaplin, and brother of the present member for Mid-Lincolnshire. Born in 1842, and educated at Harrow, he entered the Coldstream Guards in 1860 and retired in 1876, having been the year previously elected M.P. for Lincoln in the Conservative interest. The early years of Colonel Chaplin, passed as they were at Blankney, while that fine sportsman Lord Henry Bentinck had the Burton Hounds, made hunting his earliest passion. He was regularly mounted six days a week by Lord Henry for the last eleven years of that nobleman's life, and in such a country, and under such a master of the science, it is no wonder that the young Guardsman became himself a proficient. When Mr. Henry Chaplin, in 1872, gave up the old Burton country as being too large to hunt six days a week, to Mr. J. J. Foljambe, M.P., Colonel Chaplin took the southern part of the country, and the hounds were called the Blankney. For five seasons the Colonel has hunted the country to the entire satisfaction of every one, landowners and farmers, and has been able to show good sport. This season Mr. Henry Chaplin succeeds him in the Mastership.

Colonel Chaplin is well known to Londoners as a coachman, and for two or three years was constantly to be found on his coach—the Tunbridge Wells—a venture in which he had for his first partner Mr. Charles Hoare. Subsequently Colonel Halthorn, Lord Bective, and Lord Helmsley were joined with him in the proprietorship, and the coach did wonderfully well as long as it was on the road.

He is a good whip, and learned his rudiments from 'Jim Carter.' When he was in the Guards the getting together of regimental teams left him in good practice, and last year had the somewhat unusual compliment paid him—he having no coach of his own—of being elected a member of the Four-in-Hand Club.

A good shot, and anxious to try his skill on the big game, Colonel Chaplin, in 1867, made an expedition into the Zulu country, South Africa, in company with the late Colonel Harvey Tower, and had some wonderful sport, a short account of which, by the way, appeared in 'Our Van' late in 1867 or early in 1868, killing, among

other game, over one hundred hippopotami, twenty rhinoceroses, buffaloes, and a few lions.' He was singularly fortunate one morning before breakfast in killing by himself three lions; and as if that were not sport enough for one day, he in the afternoon shot a large crocodile and three antelopes—a big bag indeed. It was in the Zulu country, and among those wild surroundings, that, about the end of July, he heard, by 'express Kaffir,' of his brother's horse Hermit having won the Derby.

Colonel Chaplin is very popular in society; his presence alike welcomed at the covert side and in club and salon. He married last year Lady Gwendolen Talbot, daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury.

## DEPARTED WORTH.

Perhaps 'Our losses by death since 1873' would be the more correct heading of an article having reference to the 'Obituary of 'Stallions' which form a melancholy *finale* to that equine 'Who's 'who'—the thirteenth volume of the Stud Book, now in our hands. The return on this occasion is an unusually minute one, recording, as it does, the decease of many stallions totally unknown to fame, either in the world of racing or of breeding. A laudable desire for accuracy has doubtless incited the industrious compilers of that singularly accurate and exhaustive publication to chronicle so much small beer; nearly half of the list of deceased fathers of the stud being made up of those great unknowns and small nonentities the names of which we but seldom find associated with great winners upon the Turf. We will venture to say that few of our readers ever heard of Gamekeeper, who is stated to have passed a period of twenty-four years among us, leading, we suppose, the 'quiet life,' and serving his country after an unostentatious fashion. The immortal Joe Eldred we know, but what of his namesake who departed this life at the early age of six years, and, as the lawyers say, 'with possibility of 'issue extinct'? On what pretences have such duffers as A 1, Brahma, Cairncastle, Cottesloe, The Czar, Declaration, Gemma Junior, Goojerat, Jingling Johnny, Joco, Prince Paul, Royal Head, Theobald, Y. Sweetmeat, and Co. found niches in this Walhalla, when their feeble lustre is continually dimmed by the shining lights of other days, around whose memories a halo of glory lingers yet? Striking the average of age throughout, we find that sixteen years has been the allotted span of the forty odd included in Messrs. Weatherby's obituary; which we take to be a very low figure indeed, and quite accidental, as evidenced by reference to other sources, which need not be quoted here. If then we take the prime of life in the 'fathers of our kings to be' as from ten to fifteen years, the average period of existence from seventeen to twenty years, and claim for those which have passed the latter period the title of patriarchs, we shall be fairly classifying the 'mighty dead' which, during less than half a decade, have joined the majority in the happy pastures.

Altogether our loss has been heavy, more especially among sires in the prime of life, and includes such sensational Derby and St. Leger winners as Gladiateur, Lord Clifden, Thormanby, and Voltigeur, of which we shall have more to say in the proper places. Taking first the Nestors of the stud, and these in the stern impartiality of alphabetical order, we find Adamas (one of the many horses which 'won 'the Derby but did not get it') at the head of the list, reminding us that at the date of his decease, aged two-and-twenty, nineteen winners of the Derby have been heralded as successors to Blink Bonny. The son of Touchstone made but a modest mark at the stud, though one or two of his things could run a little, and he leaves not a mare behind him to give his name a chance of cropping up again in after-time. Next come three patriarchs, better known, as sires at least, in the north than the south of England, all of which attained the ripe age of a score years and four—the stalwart Arthur Wellesley, unmistakably of the house and lineage of Melbourne; the hollow-backed King of Trumps, reflecting faithfully his Velocipede derivation in speed, colour, and action; and the mouldy well-turned Lambton, inheriting many of the Emilius characteristics, and erst a bearer of the Merry yellow and black. 'Arthur' was no great upholder of the illustrious house from which he sprang, but from some moderate mares he begat certain 'utilities,' and Mornington lives to perpetuate the merits of an old Yorkshire favourite, whose stock the Doncaster 'dustbin' and the fairer trysting-place opposite knew well in days not long gone by. But few of King of Trumps's stock were ripe and good stayers, but their speed was undeniable, and in such a shape they were bad to beat. His daughters are likely enough to make names for themselves yet, for likelier matrons never came tramping homewards with their foals in the gloaming; but all hope of a succession in tail-male expired with the grand old chestnut Thorn, who, like Kempenfelt and his gallant comrades of the *Royal George*, died, not in the battle's shock, but yet in harness under the shadow of Penhill, while leading an exercise gallop on the home track. Thus endeth the Velocipede line for ever and for aye, and with this, its last male scion, has been lost to us another 'slice of old Alice,' so invaluable an ingredient in our racing pedigrees, not only because of its rarity, but on account of its excellence and well-recorded worth. With Lambton fell yet another pillar of the great house of Blacklock, and though his progeny were for the most part of the sprinting fraternity, nearly all that most compact race had the gift of going, and hence trainers sought them out as 'useful members,' likely to come to hand early in the season. Marsyas had completed his quarter of a century when he departed literally 'like a shadow,' and wasted to a mere memory, so to speak, of the handsome two-year-old many of us can remember making his mark at Newmarket and Goodwood in the year of grace 1853. No horse could more righteously boast of being self-made, and from the time that the late Mr. Blenkiron took him in hand he began to make way, and late in life raised up for himself such notable seed as Albert Victor and George Frederick, a second and first in the Derby, while the 'rest of the royal

'family,' and what they have achieved, is it not recorded in the book of Weatherby; the pages of which may yet reflect posthumous honours on old Orlando's son, who leaves plenty to take up the running, and claims a share in the production of the illustrious Springfield. Old 'Rat' numbered two years less than his contemporary just mentioned, but he had begun to go down the 'vale of 'life' sooner, and finds an honourable grave at Tickhill, where he lived and loved so long. His imposing list of well-nigh three score daughters, catalogued in the stud book, contains such undying names as Mahala, Mandragora, and Rigolboche, besides other contributions to the Turf of racing celebrities, but is only indifferently represented by his sons, among which precedence must be given to The Miner, now that the elegant little Blinkhoolie has left us, albeit the re-imported Cymbal comes of his house and lineage through Kettledrum, and his name crops up in the genealogical trees of Cremorne, Wenlock, and Kisber, all high upon the beadroll of turf celebrities, and mingles more remotely with other sources of famous blood. The pitmen's pet 'Unnyland,' a similarly bred and in many respects a similarly fashioned horse to his relative Lambton, brought his twenty-three years to a close at Croft, and, singularly enough, eight out of the nine veterans lately deceased were stars in Yorkshire's galaxy of sires, another of which, Young Birdcatcher, attained the years of Rataplan and Underhand, though he has nothing to show for long and honourable service with 'Wright of Richmond.' The most famous, if not the greatest, comes last, as Voltigeur hobbles forth to meet his doom at Aske, full of years, and, in his own county at least, full of honours, decreed to him both as racehorse and sire by the loving Yorkshire hearts which stood manfully by the Zetland pet through good and evil report. A fiercer war of words, not entirely removed by the death of the high priest of the accursed Blackrock tribe, surely never raged than in the controversy between the learned genealogist of Carshalton and the opposing faction, and every now and again the dispute threatens to break out afresh, notwithstanding that argument and patience on both sides have become well-nigh exhausted. Doctor Shorthouse certainly dealt Voltigeur some tremendous blows, but none of them below the belt; and it really seemed as if the Doctor's favourite aversion was indeed the failure which he had so persistently written him down, had not a revival taken place of late years by the instrumentality of Speculum and Galopin, with which celebrities Vedette came timely to the rescue, and in a vigorous and green old age the veteran may yet beget something worthy to take rank with the celebrities so amply deserving honourable mention at our hands. And we can compare the quondam antagonist of Voltigeur to no one more aptly than Macbeth, and with the conscience-stricken King of Scotland he may aver that—

'The blood bolterd Blacklock smiles on me'

against whose issue he has 'filed his mind,' and that Speculum was the looking-glass in which he beheld the reflection of a long line of equine kings, commencing with Rosebery, and 'bearing on

'their baby brows' bays and laurels the meed of Derby and St. Leger winners. With Voltigeur closes the death-roll of departed patriarchs; and to them succeeds a shorter list of those cut off in their maturity: the uneven-tempered Camerino, Gemma di Vergy, beloved of the frothy egotist of Hampton Court, Loiterer, and Newcastle, *Arcades ambo* in a breeding sense, and lastly, the last of his race, the gallant Thormanby. We have sons of Stockwell galore among us to replace and to supplant Camerino, whose connection with the name and colours of Osbaldiston will alone cause him to be held in remembrance; nor need we regret the absence of a successor to Gemna di Vergy, having Cecrops to do the honours of the Sir Hercules house; while Loiterer the deceptive and Newcastle the handsome must rest unhonoured and unsung by the chronicler of doings in the paddock, whatever transient distinction they may have achieved at the post. But to Thormanby of the stout heart and bounding action something more than mere passing allusion is due, and we could fain wish that the grand cross of Pantaloon with Muley Moloch through the immortal Alice had bequeathed to posterity some pledge worthy of its splendid result. To Thormanby's fillies, perhaps, may be confided the task of reviving his name, and though their sire has been written down as a 'chance' horse, there is an old maxim that 'blood will tell,' and for better or for worse we should rejoice to stay, if that were possible, the downfall of a tribe boasting as its head so doughty a champion as the gay and gallant Pantaloon.

The ghostly procession of those snatched away in the prime of life is too long by far, and watching them fade into the misty distance, we may note the sturdy Dalesman, two former companions at Middle Park in King John and Gladiateur, the fair but false Knight of the Crescent, and Knowsley, of the massive Glasgow breed. Then, the greatest among them all, Lord Clifden, Ranger (his victor once in France, but 'never again'), the milk-white Warrior, erst beloved of the gentle Pishey Snaith, and Wild Moor, true son of the leggy Wild Dayrell. Taking them in the order of their coming—in Dalesman we have lost the sire of Lowlander, and one of the many young King Tom sires which have done the stud some service, but we have plenty of the sort left among us, and the strapping chestnut, his son, charms the eyes and hearts of the East Riding not a hundred miles from the Holderness country. Now that Gladiateur and King John have each of them lost the number of his mess, we may reckon up the pretensions of both, and sooth to say it is small matter of regret that they are unrepresented among the ranks of British sires, albeit great things were expected from each. Knight of the Crescent was one of those singularly beautiful scions of old Besika, of Burleigh renown, which dwell in our memories yet; but there is a vein of softness, we fear, running through all the family, whose hopes were ever larger than their hearts, and few of them cared to 'come' more than once or twice in a lifetime, notwithstanding all John Scott's power of persuasion. Knowsley was perhaps one of the most racing-like of the Patagonian race propagated by the late eccentric Earl, his owner, but 'class' told against him

whenever he flew at high game, and his stock came rather coarse and common, and slightly lacking in gameness. His contribution of mares to the stud book is a fair one, and, crossed with stallions of a light blood-like type, they may repay breeders well, and they have an example of what can thus be affected in Dunmow, the son of Cecrops. People seemed to forget that Ranger was own brother to Skirmisher, and so the sire hailing from Rufford never had half a chance; while Warrior was in a similar predicament, until he took up his quarters at Highfield Hall, so far at least as concerns the thoroughbred element; and Wild Moor found but few believers in his excellence, and his brother, Wild Oats, reigns in his stead. It is in Lord Clifden, however, that all our regrets must be centred, and each year we shall find his loss more irreparable, and we know not where to look for another son of Newminster to take his place. The late pride of Dewhurst set an unmistakable mint-mark on his stock, which were mostly whole-coloured dark bays and chestnuts, with never a blaze nor a stocking, and all washy hues he seemed to shun most sedulously. None of his sons possess the size and power of their sire, and rather err on the side of shortness than of undue length, as in his own case. Hawthornden has, we believe, left the country, but Winslow is getting some remarkably good stock, contrary to the predictions of those who objected to him as 'light all over,' but more especially in the all-important point of girth. There are others less notable of Lord Clifden's progeny scattered abroad through the land, but none of much account as yet; and we trust to the public spirit of breeders in England not to let Petrarch and Hampton depart from among them, as will certainly be the case if we look behind us for a moment when they come into the market. Others, too, there may be among the rising generation, and though there is something ominous in the name of Cyprus, we have a shrewd idea that he may mend upon his two-year-old performances, while Jannette is likely to keep her sire's memory green in the land. Fortunately we are left with a strong, and happily a constantly increasing contingent of Lord Clifden's mares, which we shall do well to treasure and cherish as the apple of our eye; size, form, and quality, being rarely blended in the same animal as we see it so frequently in the daughters of the 'late lamented.'

While on these 'Old Mortality' musings intent, we may as well bring up our record of 'departed worth' to the close of 1877, the period which has elapsed since the publication of the stud book having been not without its contribution to the death-rate of stallions. '*Letifer autumnus*' may be in good sooth truthfully applied to that portion of the year which came in such deadly guise to blight the fair promise of more than flower of the Mentmore Stud; for the destroying angel stayed not his hand until both Favonius and Restitution had fallen victims to his visitation. '*Quis desiderio sit pudor aut modus?*' we may indeed exclaim over the mounded barrow which holds the ashes of the gallant chestnut which 'after long years' brought realisation to the Derby dream of his owner, and shone forth the star of stars in that eventful season, when

from northern moor to southern down and heath rang out the never-ending refrain of the 'Baron wins.' By his posthumous form must Favonius be judged, for so far, it must be admitted, he has in some degree disappointed the hopes of his admirers; and it may be true of him at the stud, as on the Turf, that he was but an indifferent beginner. His stock seems unable to hit the happy mean between extreme lightness and wiriness and somewhat coarse and rugged power; but next season may show us better things, and tell a different tale of what this grandly bred and finely shaped combination of Sweetmeat and Harkaway was capable. Of Restitution, his less distinguished companion in the Vale, it may be said that his loss could better be endured; but as we looked him over in his box at Crafton last June, he struck us as the truest made big 'un we had set eyes on for years, and likely to blossom into no unworthy successor to King Tom, who has lived to see many stalwart 'sons grow 'by his side,' only to pass away one by one, though the parent stem still retains many of its staunchest and fairest branches.

Parmesan, too, the fretful Sweetmeat pony, whose glories reflected in a *par nobile* of Derby winners fairly put out the lights of believers only in big horses as successful sires, has ceased from vexing the souls of attendants at Rufford, where his son Cremorne reigns in his stead, holding out higher hopes of distinction than his predecessor in Epsom honours, to whose untimely decease we have previously alluded. It is profitable to reflect what the Turf owes to some of such 'mere handicap horses, sir,' as Parmesan and others of his 'form' have been contemptuously designated, and doubtless through the summary rejection of such we have for a long period been playing into the hands of our neighbours across the Channel, wiser in their generation than those who argue from the standpoint of distinguished racing performances, without taking into account the blood that will tell, even as murder 'will out.' At the present time, however, what we have to apprehend is not so much an anxiety to part with our best material to France and other countries, as a tendency in the opposite direction to repurchase, at increased prices, what we were formerly in such a hurry to part with for a 'mere old song.' This will right itself shortly, but in the meantime breeders have done no harm to themselves by pandering to the public *furore* for foreign blood; and the lesson taught of not discarding our so-called second-raters without care or thought may not have been learned in vain. That all virtue has not gone out of us is amply apparent from the long list of eligible candidates seeking after full subscriptions in the pages of the *Calendar*, and we may hope that scares of the French and cuckoo cries of 'deterioration' may have been laid at rest for some time to come. Most of our old and well-tried sources of blood show no signs of failing, but contrariwise continue to flow down to us in fuller volume; so that it is still our proud boast to be able to exclaim, when another famous name is added to files of 'departed 'worth,' '*uno avulso, non deficit alter.*'

AMPHION.

# PERFECTION.

BY G. J. WHYTE-MELVILLE.

THE jewel and pride of the stable,
The brightest and best of her race,
Reliable, willing, and able,
Unequalled in fencing and pace;

Light-footed, light-mouthed, and light-hearted,
Of lineage old as the Flood,
The worth of those flyers departed,
Condensed in each drop of her blood;

As bold as a lion in daring,
But docile and meek as a dove,
With an eye like a woman's, declaring,
She asks to be governed by love.

So sure not to turn from a rasper!
So sure not to fail at a pinch!
At timber, you've only to clasp her,
She'll measure her stride to an inch.

At water go into her bridle,
But never get out of control,
For under a tree she will sidle,
Or creep like a mouse through a hole.

When rivals are floundering and blowing,
In a plight that is simply absurd,
So easy and smooth she is going,
You'd think she'd the wings of a bird.

And whether in scurry or scuffle,
And whether she *can*, or she *can't*,
With a temper that nothing can ruffle,
A courage that nothing can daunt.

So attend to my moral, and sequel:
Such treasures fall seldom to man;
You never will ride on her equal;
Make use of her now while you can.

# IDLERS IN AUTUMN.

Now it fell upon a day that there came an invitation so kind and tempting that the Idlers jumped at it, even as trout at greendrakes in the merry June time; and a petition for fine weather was forthwith despatched to the framers of the morning paper barometer charts. 'Idlers, forsooth!' said the tall gentleman, when his companion suggested that by such title they should be known during their wanderings. 'Idlers, forsooth! speak for yourself, Mr. Scribe. For 'my part, I have known no hours of idleness save the bard's. *Your* 'life, it is true, is made up of pleasant journeyings and pleasanter halts, 'of cheery days and evenings of revelry.' The Scribe laughed hoarsely. 'Would that Pamphile's ointment were on sale at the 'druggist's round the corner!' he muttered, 'how gladly would I 'become the baker's ass; and not a roseleaf should pass my lips if I 'were turned loose in the garden of Cashmere. Why, pens have worn 'a groove in my forefinger, and I dictate copy in my sleep, making 'the night watches dreadful to the sharer of my sorrows. But no 'more of this; Idlers we will call ourselves for forty-eight hours, and 'then be kicked out of the dream by the brutal foot of the giant 'Business.' The tall gentleman took from his desk an A B C Guide and ran his eyes hastily down the 'HAN.' column; then, in fancy, seemed to measure his friend's stalwart frame as for a garment; and finally, with a faint sigh, said soothingly that it should be as he wished. It was not easy to fix on a time for departure suited to each of the Idlers, for although it really mattered not a great deal to the tall gentleman at what season he took his pleasure, it was different with his companion, much of whose time is devoted to travelling in 'racing specials,' and to saddling paddocks and betting rings, and the remainder to harrying and worrying brother members of a secret society that brings its plots to maturity fifty-two times in the year. All has, however, been satisfactorily arranged, and one still sunny October morning the Idlers take train at Euston. There are no fellow-travellers in the carriage selected by the wary Scribe, and, after a slight scuffle for the most comfortable place, lengthy limbs and broad backs are comfortably bestowed. It is just the day to rejoice the hearts of folks who love quiet Nature; one of those sweet autumn mornings when there is nothing in the air to tell that summer has departed, although fields and hedgerows can no longer keep the secret. Soon the last traces of London are left behind, and the train glides smoothly through a cheerful pasture-land, with little church spires showing now and then above the trees, and the glassy canal dotted here and there with motionless barges. The fields are deserted, save where an occasional young farmer lounges along a hedge side with slouching dogs at his heels, and once or twice glimpses are caught of narrow lanes through which little troops of best-clothed rustics slowly tramp at the melancholy rest-day pace affected by all British rustics. Past Pinner, Boxmoor, and Berk-

hampstead with its smooth sloping hills and plenteous woods, the journey beguiled by philosophical discourse from the tall gentleman, and less elevated talk from the Scribe, who is a monomaniac about horse-racing, and much given to hold forth on weights and trials at unbecoming seasons. Although for a time he converses with his more solid companion of books and of men, it is not long before he artfully leads the talk into another direction, and is voluble as to how Hilarious won the Cesarewitch and will not win the Cambridgeshire. With the prophetical afflatus once on him he looks so far into the future as to suggest winners for Liverpool and good things for Shrewsbury, and is vehement in his entreaties that his companion will stand a little with him next week on 'something that cannot lose'; an advance somewhat coolly met by that worthy gentleman, who buttons up his pockets and says he will think of it.

At the end of an hour the train stops at a Hertfordshire station, that to the Idlers brings back pleasant memories of hunting and angling days. The neatest and most comfortable of vehicles awaits them, and there is no occasion for more than a short halt in a deserted thoroughfare, where the fallen leaves of autumn rustle in front of the chemist's shop and market hall. Then away the travellers bowl, past the neat ivy-covered houses of the High Street, past the quaint Robin Hood Inn, and the clean old-fashioned town is left behind, the Idlers settling down to the enjoyment of a delightful drive through still country lanes. On and on they go, at the cheerful noontide, past copses glorious in gold and russet; through noble park precincts; rolling over the grand firm roads; plashing through little watercourses; until at last they arrive at a charming abode where it is arranged that they shall sojourn for a space. What delightful hours are spent on that fascinating seat under the big walnut-tree, gazing dreamily at the variegated geraniums trailing down from the balcony overhead, and listening to the mysterious bird that talks in an unknown tongue from his cage round the corner! The Idlers look silently and with full hearts at the noble view over the lovely vale to the long irregular hills in the far distance, with intermediate breaks of thickets, copses, scattered trees, and hedgerows innumerable; just such a landscape as Gaspar Poussin has painted in a famous picture. Still, though prospect and sky are equally fair, it does not escape one of the friends, who has spent much time in woods and fields, that the loud cawing rooks are hanging and wheeling in eccentric flight betokening some great weather change, and he indulges in doleful prophecy for the morrow.

How the Idlers dined, and dosed, and smoked superb cigars, and talked words of wisdom and of mirth, as they sat on opposite sides with the blaze on the broad hearth for their cheery companion, it boots not to tell. As the night grows on, the conversation slackens, and presently ceases. The tall gentleman gazes on the glowing logs with the benevolence born of toothsome viands and ripe claret, and the Scribe's eyes close as he ponders over the doings of the day. Thoughts of the broad vale, of the fertile pastures

and calm woods, of the geranium-blushing balcony, and the seat by the walnut-tree, arise and make his heart glad. 'Oh, that it were 'decreed,' he murmured, 'that in these enchanting scenes my wearied 'brain should at last find repose! Then would the dream of my 'life be fulfilled; the boon long coveted——' 'Take it!' whispers a voice, melodious as a silver bell; 'take it!' and a smile of ineffable happiness passes over the listener's face as the spirit accents fall softly on his ears. 'Take it; do!' repeats the tall gentleman indignantly, 'and cease gasping and choking in that arm-'chair.' From his vision of bliss the bewildered Scribe wakes to find an attendant proffering a bed-room candlestick, whilst the tall gentleman winds up his watch in sleepy fashion. 'You are as ma-'licious as Bob Carver,' moans the Scribe querulously; 'why raise the 'cup of happiness to my lips and then upset it? I was in the seventh 'heaven.' 'Do cease maundering and go away to bed,' breaks in his companion; 'who in the world is Bob Carver?'

'Bob Carver,' says the Scribe, blinking in the candlelight like an owl at noon, 'was a racing man of my acquaintance, and chiefly 'remarkable as being an excellent hater. The man he hated most 'was Dick Thompson, and for a long time things had gone as badly 'with Dick as his enemy could desire. Everything went wrong 'with him. He lent people money, and they never repaid it. He 'invested in mines that never produced a ton of ore. He was always 'buying shares at a bad time or selling at a worse. The ill-luck that 'pursued his horses became a byword. Whenever something was 'coming off that seemed cut and dried for one of them, Dick was 'sure to receive a letter from his trainer to tell him that it was lame 'or coughing. Whenever his colours did come home first there 'was an objection, and the objection was sustained, or Dick had 'only a pony on at the worst price, so his account at the bank 'became very low indeed.'

Here the tall gentleman replaces his watch in his pocket and yawns loudly, and the Scribe goes on in a louder key:

'But at last it seemed that Fate was tired of tormenting him, and 'all the world agreed that he was safe to win a great spring handi-'cap with Foxhole. The horse was as fit as he could be made; he 'skimmed round the awkward course like a water-ouzel along a 'winding brook; the crack light weight was engaged; and Dick 'stood to win a fortune on the race. "Hang the beggar," thought 'Bob Carver, as he looked down the card and noted that Foxhole's 'number was 27, "I do believe he'll pull through." "Hang the '"beggar!" he thought again, with his sour face looking 'sourer than usual, as he saw Foxhole pass the stand the second 'time, pulling double; "it will set him on his legs again after all." 'Bob had left the ring to see the race from the steps near the 'reporters' gallery, but got there so late that he could not squeeze 'his way up, and as he stood in the crowd below he found that 'Dick Thompson, who had also been disappointed of a place, was 'his left-hand neighbour. Bob, who was as tall as a lamp-post, and

'as keen-eyed as a vulture, could see well what was going on, but as 'Thompson, besides being a little man, was desperately short-'sighted, it was all he could do to make out that it was a rattling 'finish between Foxhole and something else, and stammering 'with excitement, he asked Bob Carver what had won. "In a '"moment," said Bob coolly, gazing towards the judge's box, and 'as he looked his face brightened. "Hallo!" he cried, affecting to 'consult his card, "what's number 27?" "Why, my horse!" 'screamed Thompson in an ecstasy of delight, "Why, my horse! '"Hurr——" "*Then*," interrupted Bob, with a nasty smile, and 'speaking very distinctly, "*Number 27 is second!*"'

The auguries drawn from rook-flight are borne out, for in the middle of the night the Idlers are awakened from their innocent slumbers by a mighty roaring tempest, and they rise next morning to the sight of fast drifting clouds, of leaves whirling down in showers, and to dismal rumours of branch-slain calves, and carts upset by the fierce wind. Fortune is kind, however, and presently the gale drops, the sun shines warmly, and the air becomes so summerlike, that in making the round of the gardens, the companions come across a fine Persian cat lying, luxuriously lazy, on a flower-bed, like a poet's Eastern beauty in a rose-bower. But it is with nobler animals that the next few hours must be passed, and after pausing a moment to fall in love with the neatest stable-yard clock that ever was devised, the Idlers saunter into the wide yard itself, and are introduced to a model establishment by the most courteous of stud grooms. Such wonders of luxury and finish as are contained in the newly completed range of buildings had not been dreamt about in the philosophy of our Idlers, and they are loud alike in their praise of accommodation for man and horse. Such broad, airy dormitories for the helpers, with the sweet vale breeze rushing in through wide opened windows! Such snowy beds! Such a handy bath-room for the men's refreshment after a hard day! Verily clover is the portion of those who have taken service under so thoughtful and kind a master. From the harness-room, with a desk and inkstand on the table that would tempt any one but our Idlers to sit down and begin an article, those loungers make their way into the stables, and oh! such weight-carriers; oh! such bone and substance, ay, and blood too, as they find there. Vandyke, by Young Dutchman, and the powerful Malton, and Dart, by Lord Fauconberg, and the Strathconan grey, and the ear-dropping 'weaver' Lecture, with all their gallant comrades, are duly admired, William King having shown himself quite a Joseph Hayhoe of the hunting stud by the condition into which he has got his charges for the work now close at hand. Then the Idlers' eyes meet, and recollections arise of a memorable Cesarewitch day, as they renew acquaintance with an old favourite, Carnelion, a new addition to the list of stud worthies, and soon to be transferred to quarters at neighbouring Crafton. A gigantic Favonius yearling, too big to be successfully trained, is his neighbour, but there will be young thoroughbreds of greater mark to

inspect presently, when the occupants of the capital new kennels over which Fred. Cox presides have had their share of inspection. The Scribe is much more at home in the Newmarket 'birdcage' than in the greenyard of the Ascot kennels, and he holds the whip placed in his hands as if it were a cricket-bat, and sticks close by the huntsman, striving to benefit by the words of wisdom that fall on his willing ears. He is such a palpable novice, however, that the stream of talk is anon directed to his companion, more learned in hound lore. Still the green hand has instinct enough to admire the Finder sisters five, and makes a lucky shot when he pitches on the badger-pied Layman as a grand hound, for Layman, he is informed, was only the week before the special fancy of a right good judge, the special correspondent of a sporting paper. Despite this successful venture, and although the sight in the greenyard is a stirring and beautiful one, the racing enthusiast finds something nearer to his heart an hour later, and a couple of miles away, when at Markham's call of 'Poor old Tommy' a worn, shrunken-necked old horse slowly approaches the door of his box, and half returns the fond caress bestowed upon him. It is a touching sight, and in the eyes of one looker-on a little moisture collects, as he looks, probably for the last time, on the horse so good on the course, so famous at the stud, the aged and illustrious King Tom. Close at hand are promising scions of the famous Mentmore brood mares, destined some of them, ere a couple of years have passed, to carry worthily the brilliant colours that are as familiar to the racing public, and as fully trusted by them, as have been Eglinton tartan or Zetland spots. Of the glories of their predecessors, that under 'dark blue and yellow cap' have won Derby and Leger, Oaks, cups, and great handicaps, stories, racy indeed, are told presently as the Idlers pass a pleasant half-hour with the good-humoured sage under whose fostering care the great Mentmore cracks got through their youthful days.

Anon the companions find themselves under the shadows of the proud palace that is the glory of the district. Then comes a delightful time of pondering over art treasures contained within those noble walls, and strolling through shrubberies, and dawdling in aviaries. When the evening mists are growing thick the tall gentleman and the Scribe have journeyed back to the Hertfordshire station, and in a snug room of the neighbouring hotel they are joined by three other Idlers, wild birds from the great city, who with uproarious shouts seize on their staid friends, and slap their backs, and shake hands with them, vociferating that they too have come down for a day's fishing, and proposing to make a night of it. With this suggestion, it is needless to say, the elders indignantly refuse to comply, and the roysterers are soon left to their wanton devices.

The gay bloods of the party slumber long and heavily; but the original Idlers are up and out, examining the apple-trees and privet hedges in the hotel garden, and shouting angrily under their comrades' windows, as the sun shines coolly at a little past seven. The air bites rather sharply, but is brisk and refreshing, and the morning

is delightful with country sights and sounds. To London tired eyes it is pleasant to look on the golden brown beehive-shaped stacks hard by; to hear the clicking wheels of a cart as it lumbers over the clods of a neighbouring field, and the cheery voice of the driver of a grey harrow-dragging horse up on the hill. Trees, well-grown and plentiful, stand out sharply against the grey sky; there is a chirping of sparrows in the stable yard, and a distant caw of rooks in the woods; whilst the keen bright day seems to put elasticity into the steps of the men trudging to their work along the hard road, browned here and there with leaves from the horse-chestnut boughs, already sufficiently bare to show abundance of the big green, prickly globes that are the delight of childhood.

The tall gentleman has insisted that any man unprepared to start for the reservoir at half past seven shall be left behind, and dread of that strict disciplinarian induces the party to be punctual. A short and brisk drive adds to the already high spirits of the Idlers, and when they alight by the side of the broad waters to find their hearty old friend the keeper in waiting by this 'Yarrow Revisited,' with the shy crested grebes swimming far out in stately fashion, whilst coots and water-hens croak attention, if not welcome, the merry anglers feel inclined to give vent to their feelings in a cheer. In the furious gale of the previous morning one of the two punts has suffered sorely, and lies a useless wreck; but the other is happily whole. Some of the party embark, whilst the Scribe and an angler of high reputation as a slayer of salmon cast their lines from the bank.

Things are unpromising enough at first. Mist collects and hangs heavily over the water, hiding the swarm of feathered life; but presently a gleam of sun breaks out, and the vapour disperses like light smoke, showing the Ivinghoe hills, which look smooth as velvet in the distance, and the deep dark woods of Tring Park. A pair of terns have found their way thus far inland, and drop and wheel like swallows overhead; a single kingfisher shoots across a corner of the reservoir in a party-coloured flash; the great grebes sail and dive and fish, always apparently unconscious of men's presence, yet always out of gunshot. There are sights besides that observant anglers wot of to amuse the Idlers on the bank, although it must be owned that their show of fish would make a poor display on the trays of the angling clubs. He who has slain salmon can conveniently carry all his coarser victims to-day, and the Scribe hurriedly changes the conversation, when at two o'clock the boat party land and inquire after his success. Those hardy voyagers return jubilant, bearing with them a nine-pound pike, and several more of respectable dimensions. They have tales to tell how a monster was lost that showed jaws like an alligator; how the tall gentleman, generally full of sprightly talk, became, according to wont, silent and absorbed when once his line was wetted; how the calm-minded Idler fished serenely on, although perch and jack flouted his bait; how the slim gentleman sustained his great and well-earned reputation for losing hooks. There is luncheon waiting them that has come—succulent

and hot—from hospitable halls; but it is the sort of luncheon fatal to much subsequent exertion. It is the kind that induces men to lie on their backs and find unusual soothing in cigars and pipes; to feel at peace with their enemies, and able to look the world cheerfully in the face; to drop into soft dozes, and dream that they have ten thousand a year. The Idlers are not proof against its influence, and reclining in the nooks of the fisherman's hut their musings are such as these:—

'Lap on, sounding waves. Nod greeting to the rushes below, O 'willow-boughs, fearless of axe or billhook. Our blessings be upon 'you, croaking coots and diving grebes. May your eggs lie snug and 'undisturbed at nesting time; may your offspring swim away their 'youthful days unscathed by pike or marauding bird. And you, fish, 'that have to-day laughed at our beards from the depths of Startopp's 'End or the weedy shores of Marsworth, may your days be prolonged 'until Fortune makes us once more Idlers. If your lives are destined 'to be taken by men, surely it were good to perish by the hooks of 'those who can immortalize your symmetry, your size, your condi-'tion; can tell of the craft with which you sought freedom from the 'steel, of the courage and strength that to the last made your 'capture doubtful. Ere we again take stand by these pleasant waters 'many others will seek to beguile you. Hither will come men whose 'hair is not yet streaked with grey; for whom damp and cold have 'no terrors, unacquainted as they are with the torturing fiend 'Rheumatism. In the pride of their youth and hot blood they will 'remember only that pike are often hungry in frosty January, and 'that to perch in February minnows are toothsome as whitebait to 'men in June. They will be crafty withal, and learned in devices 'for your entanglement. For you will they spin the brightest of 'dace, and select the liveliest gudgeon. Be it your fortune, then, 'to grow fat and make merry for a season. Know not the heave of 'landing-net, flap not your broad tails in punt-well, until we, the 'sober, the thoughtful, the middle-aged—who can catch you with 'calm enjoyment, and ensure that you be rightly cooked—return 'once more to the water side. What time the winter is softly gliding 'into spring; when the coots are courting, and the young grebes 'think of settling in life.'

S.

## MEMOIR OF THE REV. JOHN RUSSELL.

### CHAPTER VIII.

'When the country is deepest, I give you my word
'Tis a pride and a pleasure to put him along;
O'er fallow and pasture he sweeps like a bird,
And there's nothing too wide, nor too high, nor too strong.'

WHYTE-MELVILLE.

THE formation of Russell's new and 'independent dynasty,' and the grand sport he was able to show with his little pack, gathered

though it was from all points of the compass, has been roughly sketched in the foregoing chapters; and now, it will be asked, by what active and competent whip was he supported, or what other efficient aid did he receive to enable him to bring about such satisfactory results. The question is easily answered; so strongly was he animated by the spirit of 'self-help,' so well did he know the country and the habits of the wild animal he hunted, that, with the exception of casual and very uncertain assistance from his field, and the occasional service of a raw lad—a Jack-of-all-work called Sam—he literally did the work single-handed and depended on no one but himself.

To ride a long distance to cover in the morning, to hunt a pack of foxhounds all day, and at night to jog slowly home with them to their perhaps far-distant kennel, is usually held to be work enough and to spare for any ordinary man; but if, in addition to these duties, he has to depend mainly on himself to keep them together when they divide, to stop them on riot, and, in fact, to do the work of a Whip, or even two Whips, besides that of his own, he need, like Alcides, have a double share of strength, activity, and endurance to do it all, and do it efficiently.

Nevertheless, this task, the ordinary work of at least two men, imposed as it was upon Russell by that old complaint of his—tightness of the chest—was, not only no toil to him, but a real labour of love—one he would have ridden 'bare-ridge' to perform, nay, sacrificed his last crust to enjoy.

Beckford, the Blackstone of hunting law and practice, informs us that 'no pack of foxhounds is complete without two whippers-in,' and, moreover, adds this testimony to the advantage gained by the help of a good Whip: 'I think I should have better sport and kill 'more foxes with a moderate huntsman and an excellent whipper-'in than with the best of huntsmen without such an assistant.' Again, 'No one knows better than you do how essential a good 'adjutant is to a regiment; believe me, a good whipper-in is not 'less so to a pack of foxhounds.' Then, with reference to the duty of a whipper-in, he continues, 'While the huntsman is riding to his 'head-hounds, the whipper-in, if he has genius, may show it in 'various ways; he may clap forward to any great earth that may by 'chance be open; he may sink the wind to halloo, or mob a fox 'when the scent fails; he may keep him off his foil; he may stop 'the tail-hounds and get them forward, and has it frequently in his 'power to assist the hounds without doing them any hurt, provided 'he has sense to distinguish where he is wanted most. Besides, the 'most essential part of fox-hunting, the making and keeping the pack 'steady, depends entirely upon him, as a huntsman should seldom 'rate, and never flog a hound.'

Notwithstanding the importance, then, attached by Beckford to the business of a Whip, and the high qualifications which should be found in a man acting in that capacity, Russell managed for some time to do well without one, depending, as we have seen, solely on himself and

the rough boy already referred to. But, though rough in appearance, Sam had his wits about him, and very soon profited by the lessons in which his master spared no pains to instruct him. For instance, Sam, with a view to his education, was occasionally permitted to join the well-appointed pack of the Hon. Newton-Fellowes, and at such times was especially charged to keep his eye on Stephen, first whipper-in to the latter, and carefully to note his tactics.

Then, the pastime of the day over, Russell would summon the lad to his dining-room, put him through his facings, and minutely test the result of his day's schooling by asking him such questions as the following:

'Now, Sam, you saw the second Whip riding after and rating 'those riotous puppies, Fleecer and Frantic, when he was a lanyard 'or more behind them; was he right or wrong in doing so, and 'what would you have done?'

'Got to their head, sir, and then rated them.'

'Quite right, Sam; but, bear in mind, if you want to punish a 'hound, you should hit him first and rate him afterwards.'

'Supposing a change takes place in cover, and the hounds divide, 'which lot should you stop?'

'That depends on the huntsman, sir; if he holds to one lot, I 'should stop the other, and get them forward as fast as I could.'

'That's right, Sam, and don't forget to do the same by the tail-'hounds. Good boy; you may go now.'

Thus schooled, theoretically as well as practically, Sam, blessed with some genius and strong common-sense, became in the course of a few years as useful and clever a whip as ever followed a hound; so that, with his help and the use of his own significant horn, Russell, not caring a button for show, but only for the sport, could well afford to dispense with the needless encumbrance of a more costly staff.

Some years afterwards John Beale, huntsman to Sir Walter Carew, and subsequently to the Tiverton Hounds, did wonders single-handed with the latter pack. He had the rare knack when a fox was up of getting to their head and keeping his horn going merrily alongside the leading hounds, a signal so well understood by the rest of the pack, that he rarely left a hound behind him in breaking away from the deepest covers. Many condemned him as being a tinker in his trade, making more noise than was either necessary or agreeable; nevertheless, the system worked admirably—that lively blast and sharp wild cheer of his gathered up the deep-drawing hounds as no Whip in the world could have done it, and brought them, out and together, on the very back of their fox; for nobody knew better than he did that 'a fox well found is a fox half killed.'

Thus, without the help of a regular whip, 'old John Beale' killed his foxes, and did it handsomely, showing such sport as, so long as that generation lasts, will not readily be forgotten in the Tiverton country.

Russell's plan was very much the same—his horn was half the

battle to him; but, educated as he had been in the high-class school of Mr. George Templer and Mr. John Codrington, his style, as might be expected, was that of a gentleman; for although quite as energetic as John Beale, and with an eye like a hawk to his head-hounds, no one was ever heard to object either to the lively shake of his horn or to the soul-stirring echoes of his musical cheer. On the contrary, as a farmer was once heard to say, 'It fairly 'mak'th a man's heart jump in his waistcoat to hear Passon Rissell 'find his fox; 'twixt he and the hounds 'tis like a band of music 'striking up for a dance.'

The history and character of the pack hunted by Russell during his residence at Iddesleigh, as well as some of his own doings in connection with them, having been thus far briefly recorded, the reader will probably now expect to learn something of his stud, what his powers as a horseman were, and how he acquitted himself as a rider to hounds.

To describe him as having been a brilliant performer across country, or to compare him, for instance, with such men as Mr. Assheton Smith, Mr. Lindo, or Lord Alvanley, would be wholly beside the mark; for, in the first place, Devonshire, with its picturesque scenery, deep woodlands, hollow combes, and banks averaging 10 or 12 feet in height, is a very different country to ride over from the undulating pastures and flyable fences of the Midland counties. In the next place, his financial means, to which allusion has already been made, always acting as a drag on his wheel, not only limited his choice, but constrained him to the disadvantage of a short stud, and to the absolute necessity of husbanding its resources, whenever an opportunity enabled him to do so.

Thus it may with truth be said that in moments of the purest enjoyment, when scent served and hounds were running breast-high, the thought of easing his horse and saving his legs was never absent from his mind; that was the one care that sat behind his saddle—the spectre that haunted him when the game was at his height—the one unpalatable drop in the bumper of enjoyment he was drinking to the dregs; for the thought of to-morrow would obtrude itself, would make him constantly dismount and lead his horse over high banks; when, if his stud had been less limited, he certainly would have taken the quicker, and, to himself, the far easier mode of getting at his hounds.

Russell, therefore, could neither be called a bruiser, nor even a hard man, in the common acceptation of that term; but his judgment as a horseman could never be impugned; he had fair hands, a quick eye, a heart in the right place, and so firm and yet easy a seat in the saddle, that no one looking at him when mounted but would say, 'That's a workman, every inch of him.'

Nevertheless, despite the drawback mentioned, and all other difficulties, Russell very rarely failed to be close to his hounds; nor, though he lamented his 'cumbrous weight'—some 12 stone odd—did the three brave horses that carried him so safely and well for

many a hard season appear to be overtaxed by the work, or show any signs of unnatural decay. They were called Billy, Cottager, and Monkey.

The last, a chestnut horse, although somewhat uncertain in his temper, became a hunter of great renown in the county, doing his work admirably, and coming home gay as a lark after the longest day. The second was an entire horse, very clever at his fences, but very vicious; he would turn round and bite like a bull-dog, if the rider gave him the ghost of a chance. Even in his gallop he would occasionally take a grab at the point of Russell's foot; and, had he caught it, would have torn the boot ruthlessly from his leg. Twice he seized him by the coat, but fortunately without doing more damage than merely rending the garment. Once indeed he very nearly brought an old friend of Russell's, Dr. George Owen, to serious grief. They were riding in chase side by side—the hounds running hard—when Cottager in a sudden paroxysm of temper made a fierce grab at Owen's horse; but, luckily, instead of catching him with his teeth, he only caught the saddle-cloth and one skirt of the rider's coat. These he tore from the back of both, leaving the worthy doctor—the 'Owen swift and Owen strong' of that country—in the ludicrous predicament of Bailie Nicol Jarvie, when cut down by the dirk of the Highland gillie.

On another occasion Russell, when riding Cottager and hunting with a new draft from the Hambledon Hounds, found a fox near Beaford Moor, and pressed him in cover so sharply that he turned short and broke away, unknown to him, down wind. Losing sight of the pack and fancying he viewed a tail-hound at the extreme end of the moor, he rode up and there found an Irish packman, Peter Dougan by name, standing on a bank, and blown by the chase; but still staring after it with bated breath and longing eyes.

'Have you seen the hounds, my man?' inquired Russell eagerly.

'Iss, your honour; they're jist ahead, running like a peal of 'bells.'

'Then jump up behind me, pack and all;' said Russell, charmed with the man's enthusiasm and evident love of hunting; 'jump up, 'and you shall see a bit more of the sport.'

'Bedad then,' said Peter, 'that I'll do;' and as Russell adjusted Cottager to the bank, Peter and his pack took their place behind the cantle, notwithstanding the broad meanings displayed by the horse on being thus loaded. He then turned to, kicked furiously, and never stopped kicking till he had fairly floored Peter and his pack.

Not long after this adventure, when Russell was riding the chestnut horse Monkey, Peter again met him, and said he had a great favour to ask him, and that was, that he would allow him to ride that horse over a five-barred gate, with his hands tied behind his back, his face to the horse's tail, and without saddle or bridle. 'And,' said Peter entreatingly, 'I'll give ye me pack, sir, af ye'll let me do it; and, by 'me sowl, 'tis worth five pounds.'

Russell, in a state of wonderment, inquired why he was anxious to perform such a feat, pointing out the danger of attempting it in such a fashion.

'Faix, your honour,' replied Peter, 'I should like to tell 'em what 'I've done in England when I get back to the ould country.'

Monkey with hounds, and in a good temper, would jump any ordinary five-barred gate; but otherwise wouldn't rise at a fender. 'Had I granted his request,' said Russell, 'the horse would have 'broken Peter's neck to a dead certainty.'

For years afterwards the Irishman, on his annual journeys to England, never failed to include in his pack a few silk pocket-handkerchiefs of the blue bird's-eye pattern, which he brought especially for Russell's use; and it was with no little difficulty that he could be persuaded to take payment for those articles, so devoted an admirer was he of Russell and his hounds. And so well known to the hawking fraternity in Ireland was Russell's name, that not five years ago—forty years after Peter Dougan's date—the former overtook two Irishmen near South Molton, and, having packs on their backs, he inquired whence they came: 'From Ireland, your 'honour,' was the reply; 'we landed at Ilfracombe last night.'

'Have you any handkerchiefs of this pattern?' asked Russell, showing them a bird's-eye blue one.

'No, your honour; they are very scarce now.'

'Well,' he replied; 'I bought them from a countryman of yours, 'Pat Dougan by name.'

''Tis Peter Dougan, you mane; and you are Mr. Russell, ef you 'had them from him. Ah! poor Peter; he dearly loved hunting, 'and was always talking about your riverence; he's been dead many, 'many years.'

On parting company the packmen volunteered to bring him the handkerchiefs he required; a promise which, after due time, they did not fail to fulfil.

Now for Billy, the stand-by of Russell's stable, and, as he declares to the present day, the best horse he ever crossed in his life. Billy was a bay pony, 14 hands high—'big as a mountain and long as 'to-day and to-morrow'—he was by a two-year-old grass colt by Twilight, a grandson of Eclipse, out of an Exmoor pony; and was bred by Mr. Wreford of Clannaborough, so well known to Devonshire men as one of the most successful breeders of blood stock in the West of England.

Of the stout and enduring qualities of Billy it is enough to say that Russell never knew him beaten; nor, as a proof of it, did he ever fail to come home merrily, however long the day, and pick up his corn, to the last grain in the manger. His staying powers in chase, his bank-fencing, and mode of getting through heavy ground, under the weight he carried and the pace he maintained, were truly marvellous. 'Russell,' writes Mr. Harris, 'mounted me once on 'Billy, and little did I anticipate the great treat in store for me. 'The meet was at Broadbury Castle; and thinking him a pony I at

'first rode him quietly; but when hounds began to run, Billy pulled 'at his snaffle, and letting him go he went with a will right up to 'the head, as if he had said to himself, "That's my place, and I '"mean to keep it." And so he did; no bank could stop him; no 'pace choke him off; he could stay all day, and go a cracker through 'dirt up to the very last. In fact he was in every respect a steed 'worthy of his renowned ancestor; and I much doubt if Wreford 'ever bred a gamer or a better animal.'

Russell, it is almost superfluous to say, valued him as the apple of his eye; nay, if he had suffered himself to be tempted by gold, he might at any time have filled his pockets with the price of Billy. But to all offers Russell cried, Avaunt! and death alone divided the twain.

Nor was that altogether strictly the case; for when the event took place after a faithful servitude of more than ten years, Billy's glossy hide, being removed by skilful hands, was sent to a tanner's, and afterwards formed the covering of a most comfortable arm-chair. The legs and hoofs, the latter beautifully polished and fitted with invisible castors, were all Billy's; and well might Russell, reclining in the once familiar seat, and perhaps dozing after a long day's work, be led by fancy's dream to believe that Billy was again under him, sharing the sport together as of yore, and bearing him on eagle-wings to the front of the chase.

Such a dream would surely be far less unnatural and far happier than the endless inconsequential visions in which men, dipped in Lethe's stream, are so apt to indulge.

But, though Russell would ofttimes allude with tearful regret to the memory of Billy, quoting if not the words the very sentiments of Prince Llewelyn—

'Best of thy kind, adieu!'

he conferred the same honour on Cottager and Monkey; and there they all stood in the dining-room at Tordown, as if the gods in a moment of compassion had transformed the trio into easy arm-chairs, determined that Russell and his friends, like Baucis and Philemon, should not be parted even by death.

Such was his mode of cherishing the remembrance of the faithful brute companions that had served him so well in life; and on their part they were still, as it were, doing him grateful service by administering to the comfort of himself and guests, and reminding them of many a bygone day of thrilling sport and innocent re-creation.

Frederick the Great, we are told, expressed a wish even in his will to be buried with his favourite dogs, and especially near the horse that had carried him so often to victory; but Russell's fancy for conserving the relics of his mute friends and enjoying their company, still present in the form of arm-chairs, conveys a far pleasanter notion than that of the old warrior, whose last words were, '*Je serai bientôt plus près de lui.*' Notwithstanding his

will, however, his faithful pets did not 'bear him company,' for his body received the burial of a Christian, and lies under the pulpit in Potsdam Church.

Many a pleasantry would Russell pass when inviting a guest to take a seat on one of his old friend's backs. 'There,' he would say, 'give old Cottager a turn; he'll carry you as easily as a feather-bed; 'and he never bites now.' Or, 'Try Billy; if he can't go through 'dirt as he once could; he's up to any weight and won't give you a 'fall.'

These, however, are later reminiscences of Tordown, the Alpine home to which he removed on quitting Iddesleigh in 1832, and to which he has once more recently returned; hoping, as he says, now to remain there till 'the golden bowl be broken, and the spirit shall 'return unto God who gave it.' But the sketch given of the horses has carried both writer and reader over the scent, and a backward cast—never a favourite one of Russell's—is now necessary to recover the line.

Russell had now entered on the third season of his Mastership, and so far had literally basked in the sunshine of success; but in the autumn of 1829, without being an augur, he was not slow to observe that over the Tetcott and Broadbury districts loomed ominous clouds, which portended a break up of the present arrangements, as well as probably an extensive change in the landmarks of his country. Nor was he kept long in suspense; for on Friday the 13th of November his pack met at Five Oaks for the last time under the old *régime*. A glorious finale, however, crowned the event; he killed a brace of foxes, the first in fifty minutes, and the next at the end of a long dodging run, in which by the manner he handled his hounds Russell's woodcraft was eminently displayed.

The circumstances that led to the change may aptly be termed a complicated tissue of events. In the first place the country was much too large for the means at command; for, owing to the ardent support of the Yeomen-farmers, far and wide, foxes had largely increased throughout the land; consequently the damage fund and the expense of feeing the keepers, &c., rising proportionately, the sum total amounted soon to a serious charge on an exchequer too often inconveniently straightened and never overflowing. This perhaps may be considered the root, the '*fons et origo mali*' of the whole matter. But there was also a general suspicion among Russell's friends that jealousy had a finger in the pie; and that that feeling, intensified by the impression that the country was insufficiently hunted, prompted a small party, including the Molesworth Trustees, to come forward and suggest the need of another pack of hounds, and therefore the curtailment of Russell's country.

So the Landue pack, under the command of as gallant a rider as ever crossed a country, Mr. Phillipps, late of the 7th Hussars, better known as Tom Phillipps, was forthwith started, and the Tetcott, Hayne, and Broadbury covers wrested from Russell and handed over to him. He then took formal possession of the country, 'the limits

'of which,' writes Russell, 'appeared to me to be illimitable; for 'they claimed all the covers from Hatherleigh—three miles from 'my kennel at Iddesleigh—to Wade Bridge, ten miles below 'Bodmin.'

Phillipps, however, met one morning at Gribbleford Bridge, only two miles from Hatherleigh, found four brace of foxes in the cover —a dog, vixen, and three brace of cubs—but made a mull of it, called off his hounds in disgust and went home, a distance of thirty miles at least to his kennel. After some time it was communicated to Russell that Phillipps would never draw those covers again; so as the country was a choice one, comprising the fine moorland district of Broadbury, the wildest in the West of England, Russell bethought him how he could best recover his footing and bring about the desirable end of securing it for his own.

A turn in his favour by the wheel of fortune soon gave him a suitable opportunity; Mr. J. Morth Woolcombe happening to join him one morning, 'they found,' in Russell's words, 'a right real 'Dartmoor Hector, and away he went for his native moorland, 'straight as a bee-line; but he never set foot on it, for we ran into 'him about a mile short of his haunts. Just before we killed him, 'he crossed some enclosures, and the hounds coming back to us, I 'held up my hand and said, "Stand still, gentlemen, pray! the fox '"is in this field." It was not two acres and it was plough.

'"Nonsense!" cried Woolcombe; "we should see him if he '"were."

'"He is here, I tell you, if I know my hounds." And in a 'moment they seized him within a few yards of his horse's feet.

'His delight was unbounded; he begged me as a particular favour 'to go home by way of Ashbury, invited the whole field into the 'hall, drew cork after cork of Champagne, toasted the little Idde- 'sleigh pack and their Master, and promised similar hospitality 'whenever they killed a fox within reach of his domain.

'He kept his word too up to a certain time, when, prompted as 'it was then believed by the demon of jealousy, he contemplated 'my downfall, and thus he tried to accomplish it. He sent his 'brother Robert over to Iddesleigh to negotiate for the purchase of 'my whole pack. I was not at home; but when I returned to dinner, 'Mrs. Russell said, "Robert Woolcombe has been here all the '"morning, waiting to see you."

'"And did he say what he wanted?" I inquired.

'"His brother is anxious to buy your hounds, and sent him over '"to treat for them; they think that, as a clergyman, you ought '"not to keep them."

'"They are very kind neighbours," I said, "and I fully appre- '"ciate their good feeling; *but* at the same time I hope I do them '"no wrong if I altogether mistrust their motives."

'"Robert is coming again to-morrow," continued Mrs. Russell, '"and is bent on seeing you."

'Before the morrow arrived, however, the "*timeo Danaos*" feeling

'had taken full possession of me, and, being forewarned as to the 'object of his visit, I was fully prepared with my answer.

'The next day he accordingly came; and, as he took me by the 'hand, I said, "Well, Robert, and pray what's your pleasure?"

'"I came to buy your hounds," he responded bluntly; "what's '"your price?"

'"Three hundred guineas," I replied, "for all but five couple, '"which I shall keep."

'"A bargain," he said; "I'll take them. But what are you going '"to do with the five couple?"

'"Keep them as a nucleus for another pack."

'"Oh, that will never do," 'he said; "we want the country; 'the hounds are no use to us without it."

'"Then you shall have neither, Bob," was my decisive reply.

'And so ended the negotiation. We then parted, and I went on 'hunting the country and killing the wild animal as heretofore.'

It was a real grief to Russell for many a day afterwards to discover, as he very soon did, that foxes in the Broadbury country became scarcer and scarcer yearly, and that at length Mr. Woolcombe went so far as to wage open war against the whole race by ordering his keepers and tenants to trap, shoot, and destroy every fox they found bred or travelling over his estate. And so rigorously was this mandate executed, that a paragraph appeared in the papers announcing the number of vixens and cubs he had destroyed, and calculating that he had rid the country of no less than two hundred and fifty foxes, great, small, and forthcoming. Nay, large placards were printed at Okehampton and posted in the neighbourhood, setting forth the above gross statement, and justifying the slaughter as one of meritorious service to the whole community.

But although at the time it was denounced as a most unneighbourly proceeding on the part of Mr. Woolcombe, there are good grounds now for believing that he was, in truth, influenced by conscientious scruples only, rather than by any ill-will to Russell; for in speaking of him apart from his profession, he was wont to express his unbounded admiration of his manly power and pre-eminent ability in all that pertained to the science of woodcraft.

Great indeed was the indignation, especially of the hunting community, at this wholesale massacre of the foxes. One, Jack White, is said to have upbraided Mr. Woolcombe, who was a very tall man, to his very face.

'Let me tell you, sir,' said Jack, 'that you're six feet four of the 'very worst stuff as I ever seed wrapped up in one bundle. Gude 'morning, sir.'

It was not without good reason, therefore, that Mr. Phillipps, either from a mistrust in the friendship of the cover-owners, or from a manly feeling that he would be doing Russell an ill-service by continuing to hunt that country, declined, after the day at Gribbleford Bridge, to bring his hounds again to that locality, and thenceforth devoted himself exclusively to the region round about Tetcott and

Pencarrow. One thing is certain, that in every transaction with respect to Russell and the Broadbury country, Mr. Phillipps's conduct was always straightforward and altogether unimpeachable.

Early in the spring of 1831 the young baronet, Sir William Molesworth, then in his twenty-first year, having invited a large party of gentlemen to meet Phillipps and the Landue Hounds at Pencarrow for a fortnight's hunting, the house was filled to the rafters. Two stalls were allotted to each guest, and hacks *ad libitum* found room in the stables of the neighbouring tenants. The few survivors of that meeting—and now, alas, they are '*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*'—will never forget the 16th of February in that fortnight, when a fox was found at Polbrock, near the river-side, every hound breaking away almost on his back, bringing him over the paling into Pencarrow Park, and by the Roman mounds away to Helland Wood; thence tearing on with a burning scent over the virgin soil of the vast rough inclosures, they carried a grand head, and dashing five or six couple abreast over the big boundary fence, broke out on the moor and on to the Launceston and Bodmin road, where they dropped into slow hunting and then threw up.

The road was of granite, hard as iron and dry as brickdust; but a hound called Memory, with nose well down, held on, faintly feathering here and there, yet still on—the rest of the hounds, with heads up, being hopelessly at fault. Phillipps, growing impatient and grasping his horn, was turning to cast them towards the Torrs northwards, when Russell, keeping his eye on Memory, held up his hand and exclaimed, 'Do, pray, give her time. There!—she has 'it, I tell you, and will fling her tongue in half a minute, if you'll let 'her alone.'

But Phillipps *would* make his cast, while Russell and Mr. Pomeroy Gilbert remained stationary, intent only upon Memory, as she still persevered steadily on the road. At length a patch of wet soil giving her a chance she dropped her stern, and at the same time throwing her tongue, dashed over the heather bank on to Temple Moor and away. Russell's scream was too thrilling, too rapturous to describe. Away, away, over that grand waste of heather—a thorough wilderness; not a vestige of man; not a solitary patch of gorse; not even a twig to shelter a wild animal for leagues.

Racing him to the boundary fence of the moor above Trebartha the hounds caught a view, and instantly, as if by a stroke of magic, they and the fox vanished from the scene. It seemed to the foremost riders—Mr. Charles Trelawny on Oswestry, Mr. Phillipps on Foster, Mr. Harris, Mr. Coryton, and Mr. Tom Hext, who was the first to view him—that the earth had opened her jaws and swallowed them alive.

> 'Non secus ac si quâ penitus vi terra dehiscens
> Infernas reseret sedes.'

And such was the case, the shaft of an old mine lay open, and they had fallen

> 'Into utter darkness, deep engulphed.'

The fox, indeed, with the activity of a wild beast, had clambered on to a broken beam; but three of the leading hounds were swimming about in the dark water at the bottom of the mine, some seven fathoms deep; while the rest of the pack had stopped short of the abyss and scrambled out.

'Gone to ground with a vengeance,' exclaimed Phillipps with bitter emphasis, dreading the loss of his hounds.

In a few minutes some miners appeared on the ground; but not a man of them would go down, not daring to face the dangers of the decayed framework in the precipitous shaft. Not so, however, 'Jack Russell,' who, with a knotted rope in one hand and his hunting-whip in the other, lowered himself, amid a shower of loose stones and earth, to the beam on which the fox was crouching. Then running the thong through the keeper of his whip, and fixing the noose round the animal's neck, he shouted aloud, 'Haul away, 'I've got him!' and in half a minute he and the fox were landed again on *terra firma*.

'Save him, Phillipps; he is a gallant fellow and deserves his life,' said Russell, begging hard for a reprieve.

But Phillipps sternly said 'No;' and tossed him to the hounds.

Then, to save the three brave brutes now struggling in the pit from a longer immersion, Russell was again prepared to go to the rescue, again ready

> 'Bis Stygios innare lacus, bis nigra videre
> Tartara,'

had not Colonel (afterwards Sir Walter Raleigh) Gilbert persuaded a miner, by the bribe of a capful of silver, to go down; and, secured by a rope round his waist, to bring up the hounds, one by one, safely 'to bank.'

It was a grand run throughout: sixteen miles as the crow flies—measured on the map—and the last seven over the wild open moor without the shadow of a fence or check from first to last.

Russell to this day speaks of it as one of the finest things he ever witnessed; but the cream of the run, the finishing touch—that brilliant passage over the Bodmin Moor—was due to him and to him alone.

Of the many queer incidents that befel him in those early days, the one he met with at Porlock is by no means the least amusing; and, as it illustrates the feeling of a strong partisan in favour of him and his hounds, it shall be told as nearly as possible in his own words:

'In the spring of 1830 I took my little pack down to Porlock to 'enjoy a week's hunting in the open and extensive commons in that 'locality; and rare sport we had day after day both with fox and 'hare. I was accompanied by the Rev. J. Pomeroy Gilbert, there 'to be joined by the Rev. H. Farr Yeatman, two of the best and 'most accomplished sportsmen I ever met, to whose names let me 'add that of George Templer of Stover, such a trio they were as the 'world has rarely seen together in the hunting-field.

'On our return from the hills one evening Mrs. Smith, our hostess 'at the Ship Hotel, where we were staying, thus accosted me:

'"If you plaise, Mr. Rissell, that old scamp, Squire Tamlyn, as '"they call 'en, hath a been down here to forbid you from hunting '"over his property. Now hearken to me, sir, and us'll tackle 'en, '"as all sich varmint ouft to be tackled. Ask 'en to come here '"and dine with ee to-morrow, and when he'th a sot down comfort-'"able afore the fire, give the t'other gentlemen a wink to leave the '"room, and I'll come in quietly behind 'en, seize his both arms, '"and then do you wallop 'en over the face and eyes till he sings '"out for mercy. I'll never let 'en go, mind, till you've a finished '"with 'en; and that I'll promise ye."

'At this point I ventured to remonstrate with her; urging, first, 'that it would be a gross breach of hospitality, and then that a 'summons for the assault would be sure to follow.

'"But," exclaimed the woman, "the magistrates shan't get a '"word out of me to convict you, sir, if he doth get a summons; '"and what's more, I'll tell 'em two or three such pretty stories '" about 'en, as he won't like to hear; and there the matter'll end."

'The next day,' says Russell, 'with the view of propitiating Mr. 'Tamlyn, I wrote him a very polite note inviting him to dine with 'us; but he declined the honour, much to the disgust of Mrs. Smith, 'who consoled herself with these words: "Well, never mind, I'll '"give it to 'en myself the first time I set eyes on the mean old '"scamp."

'And,' continued Russell, 'I have reason to believe that she 'absolutely kept her word; for she was a veritable termagant—a 'tigress in petticoats—a "*Penthesilea furens.*"'

One result of the week's sport being somewhat remarkable, it may interest the reader to have it also in Russell's own words: 'The very 'day Tamlyn went to Porlock to forbid my hunting, I found a fox 'in the heath on Lucat Common, his property. Thinking it was a 'vixen, I rode up to the bush, out of which she jumped, and, 'behold! curled up in a warm nest were four live cubs. I tied 'my handkerchief to a bush hard by, and rode after the pack as fast 'as my horse could carry me. But it was a blaze of scent all the 'way; and in thirty minutes, to my great annoyance, they ran into 'and killed poor little Vicky. I then returned to her kennel, took 'up the cubs—all four vixens—and sent them by Bat Anstey to 'Iddesleigh, fifty miles away. An earth was made for them 'under Halsdon, Mr. Furse's residence; and in and around that 'earth they remained, being ear-marked, and thriving well, till the 'following October, when, suddenly, they disappeared, and I never 'had the good luck to find one of them again with hounds.

'*Six years afterwards* I met the late Mr. Newton of Bride-'stowe, in Barnstaple, and he asked me if I had ever ear-marked—'describing the mark—any foxes, and lost sight of them.

'Yes;' I said, 'four cubs, all vixens. "Then," he replied, "I '"found them last March in some brakes near Broadwood-Widger, '"twenty-five miles below Halsdon; had good runs with each, and '"killed all four."'

# MEADOW AND PASTURE LANDS:
## THEIR RENOVATION AND REPAIR.

BY J. H. SHORTHOUSE, M.D., LL.D.

(*Conclusion.*)

It is within the experience of most of my hearers that if a well be sunk or a pit dug to a great depth and earth come to which has probably not been moved for millions of years that the soil or sand from the lowest depth will contain seeds in which latent vitality still exists, and which will, when the accessories of vegetable life—light, moisture, and warmth—are added, sprout forth into cognisant existence. I know it is sometimes alleged that the seeds must have been brought to the banks of the pits by the birds or wafted there by the winds; but I tried an experiment a few years ago. A friend of mine had a very deep pit sunk at Sutton for the purpose of using it as a tank for water. I asked him to place some of the soil taken from the lowest depths into boxes and then put the boxes in one of his small hothouses. He did so and the boxes were daily watered. The houses were locked up and the windows fastened down so as to be impervious to wind which would bring seeds upon its wings and no bird that lives could, I am sure, have found access to the place if it were so disposed. We did not see any seeds, but that they must have been in the sand and earth was proved by the result, for the surface of the soil in the boxes was, in the course of a few weeks, covered with vegetation. Some of the plants were entire strangers to me, but of those which I could recognise, the corn poppy (*Papaver rhœas*) was most abundant, which is rather surprising when we consider that poppy seeds are somewhat soft and, as I should have supposed, more perishable than harder seeds such as clover and charlocks, nor indeed were the last-named of our old friends wanting, for there were many of them, so that our forefathers for many generations back were not without 'pests' on their farms. There were several sorts of dwarf clovers, one plant of vetch, and one of lucerne, and, as I have mentioned, some unknown plants. It is fair to presume that the seeds from which these plants sprang were much older than any recorded in history. The vetch, lentils, lucerne, and other fabaceous plants are not novelties, for one or other of them are mentioned by Virgil, Pliny, Palladius, Cato, Varro, and other ancient writers. Pliny is very warm in his commendation of lucerne; he makes some statements which most of you will endorse, viz., that it can be mown four to six times a year and that it fattens lean and cures sick cattle; he also puts forth two statements which, I dare say, you wish you could endorse, viz., that lucerne 'enriches land,' and another more enviable still, viz., 'land 'of such kindly fertility that the crop smothered everything and 'required no weeding.' Who amongst you does not envy the stern, energetic, yet sometimes obscure, Roman philosopher of such land

as that? Old seeds then *will* germinate if they have not been artificially killed despite what the seedsmen may say.

If any of you are induced, in consequence of what has transpired to-night, to put your grass lands in order, and renovate them by ploughing up the old meadows and pastures and sowing them afresh; or repairing them by means of the scarifier, harrow, and a sprinkling of new seeds, you will find abundant information as to the choice of seeds in the catalogues of the vendors, and which they send out with such lavish profusion to their customers or expectant customers. It is beside my plan and purpose on the present occasion to make a selection of seeds, nor indeed would it be possible to make one which would be applicable to every soil. Different soils nourish different seeds, and the catalogues will guide you in their selection better than I am able to do. But there is one point which I wish most strenuously to enforce, and it is, whether in laying down or repairing upland pastures and meadows, especially those on a chalky subsoil, never omit to sow with your seeds a small quantity of sainfoin (*Onobrychis sativa*), which is so valuable that I am surprised it is not oftener sown in a mixed crop. I hold this plant in the highest esteem; it has, so to speak, so much backbone in it, such stamina-giving power; it is drier and more nutritious than clover, does not exhaust the soil like lucerne, nor does it attract that pest of the clover plant, the beautiful but mischievous parasite, Dodder. I am aware it is sometimes sown alone, but then how seldom is it that we see a clean crop of it? There are generally fifty weeds to one plant of sainfoin. If it were mixed with the grasses, clovers, and trefoils it would give stability to them whilst they would assist in keeping it from being encumbered by weeds. Therefore, whether the uplands be required for grazing or mowing I would especially enjoin a trial of this valuable legume.

Lastly, let me remark that although it is not desirable to bury the seeds too deep, yet the deeper the soil is disturbed, whether by the plough or the scarifier, the better. The deeper the plants can take root below the surface, the more abundant will be the crop above it. It is not, perhaps, either wished or desired to rival the Jersey carrots of 14 feet length, nor Mechi's of 12 feet, or even the more marvellous one of Kentucky, which penetrated so deep that it was drawn out by its roots at the Antipodes; but still I question whether shallow ploughing or scarifying for crops of some permanency is worth the cost; indeed, I do not think I should thank any man who would offer to do such work for me gratis.

One of the best manures for grass land is unquestionably fish, which on the eastern coast can be obtained in any reasonable quantity, and at a cost so trifling that it ought to supersede guano, bone dust, and other expensive manures; yet I am informed so little is it valued in this neighbourhood, that when the farmers can have it for fetching away, they do not avail themselves of the privilege. I am assured that in this town there is a very large amount of refuse fish sent away to brimstone barn in order to get rid of it, the farmers

not caring to fetch it away from the fishmongers. It has two drawbacks, one of which, however, I will show you how you can surmount. It stinks so abominably that it cannot be used near to towns or villages, and also the rooks and other birds are very fond of it, so that unless it be covered very deeply, it will all be carried away by the birds. Some of my readers may perhaps remember a most intolerable nuisance which was created at Sutton and Banstead some seventeen or eighteen years ago. Mr. Grossmith, who occupied the hundred-acre farm on Banstead Downs, bought six truck-loads of fish, sprats and other common fish, at a very cheap rate. I forget the price, but think it was some ten or twelve shillings per ton. All the trucks were sent down one night to Sutton Station, but as Mr. Grossmith had only three horses—and as it was summer time, he could not hire more from his neighbours—the fish stank in the trucks so abominably before he could fetch it away, that the travellers could not use the station, and kicked up a tremendous row. Poor Grossmith was in a desperate stew, and was driven into a state of frenzy, being threatened with actions at law right and left. When the fish was carted up on the Downs, and spread over the land, as he had no horses available for ploughing it in, the rooks assembled in tens of thousands, and ate up all the fish. The land was quite black with them, and so attractive did the fish appear to be to their palate, that even firing off a gun disturbed them very little; it certainly did not drive them away.

I shall bring under your notice a very inexpensive method of medicating, or 'anointing' fish, seeds, potatoes, peas, &c., which will enable you to be indifferent to the ravages of birds of prey, small birds, and rats. I can very confidently recommend the plan for adoption, as I have put it to the test several times, and invariably with satisfactory results.

Some three or four years ago I read an extract from the 'Gardeners' Chronicle,' in which the use of petroleum was recommended to prevent birds destroying freshly-sown seeds. The writer said that a pint of petroleum would be quite sufficient for a bushel of turnip or clover seed, and that the birds disliked the taste of petroleum so much they left the seeds alone which were scented with it. He said it was not necessary the seeds should be saturated with it; if they obtained the merest flavouring of it, that would suffice. He advised that about a pint of petroleum and a bushel of seed be put in a sack, then shook about well, so that each seed might have a taste of the oil; this would be amply sufficient to deter the birds from preying upon the seeds. I have tried the plan on a small scale in my garden with mustard, turnip, charlock, and other seeds, and also with peas, potatoes, apples, and sprats, and I can fully indorse the gardener's views, that the plan he recommended is both effective and inexpensive.

It has been said proverbially that there is 'nothing new under the sun.' Although I have not been able, in a somewhat extensive reading, to meet with an application of petroleum of an earlier date than the one I

have mentioned of three or four years ago, for the purpose of preventing the attacks of birds upon seeds, still I have discovered many records of an analogous application of it to prevent the ravages of insects and other desperadoes. In a book entitled 'Useful Knowledge,' by the Rev. Wm. Bingley, M.A., F.L.S., published very early in the present century, I find mention made of this mineral product being used from a very remote antiquity in various ways, *e.g.*, by painting with it the timber of houses and the timber used for the bottoms of boats and other vessels, to preserve the timber from the attacks of marine worms. For this purpose it has probably been superseded by Stockholm tar and pitch; but these materials could not be used for the purpose of medicating seeds; their adhesiveness would cause the seeds to lump together in large masses. Something much more liquid is required, and petroleum answers every purpose. It is effective, and moreover it is very cheap. The impure, crude, or stronger sort can be purchased at about threepence or fourpence per gallon, and that amount would suffice for a sufficient quantity of seed to sow a field of many acres. Solid petroleum (or bitumen) was used for cementing or protecting the walls of Babylon and of the Temple of Solomon. The mother of Moses used it as a coating for the little vessel in which he was exposed, and, according to Herodotus, a composition of it made warm was used with the tops of reeds as a cement by the ancients.

It may be asked whether this oil has any detrimental effect upon the germinating property of the seed, and I can confidently answer that it has none whatever. They grow just as quickly as they would have done without it; the young plants have the odour and taste of it for a few days only, until they are an inch or so high, and then it gradually evaporates. So that if it will prevent birds from taking seeds as soon as they are sown, and also secures the young buds and stems until they are old enough to be no longer inviting to birds, it will be found a valuable adjunct to agriculturists and seedsmen, for we must not lose sight of the fact that the mere cost of the seed is not the only loss, a more serious one is the cost of the preparation of the land, and which, if the seeds be picked up as soon as sown, will have been so much labour in vain.

It may also be asked whether, if a heavy shower of rain were to fall soon after the seeds were sown, the petroleum would be washed off, and the seeds then left at the mercy of the birds. I answer—

> 'It may rain, it may hail, it may snow as it will,
> But the scent of petroleum will hang round 'em still.'

I may perhaps be permitted, even by the seedsmen, to encroach a little upon their territory, and to give them a word of advice or make a suggestion which I think is of some importance. But whether I receive permission or not I shall take French leave. You know how difficult it is to keep up successive crops of flowering plants and fruit-trees in their pristine purity. The pips from a bushel of Ribstone pippins or any other apples will not, if planted

and permitted to grow up into trees, probably produce a single tree of the same kind, and possibly not two exactly alike. The same with heartsease and other choice flowers. The reason is this: bees and butterflies are 'sad go-betweens,' the pollen of one plant gets intermixed with the pollen of others, and so hybrids are produced. In some instances the hybrids may possibly be superior to the original stock, but such a result cannot be calculated upon with anything like certainty. In the neighbourhood of Carshalton, where large fields of lavender are cultivated, the fruits and flowers of some other plants, which are in season about the same time, smell strongly of lavender—this must be caused by the bees. The honey, too, is in those hives which are in propinquity to the lavender fields, so strongly impregnated with the flavour and odour of lavender as to be absolutely nauseous. Now my suggestion to the growers of large areas of flowering plants, if they want to keep those plants, flowers, and seeds in their pristine purity, is that they have a number of beehives in the fields, in which the bees might deposit the honey and avert the necessity of their returning home or going wider afield, tempted by some more dainty flower. Give them the chance of following the advice which Robert Burns gave to his 'Yowie, 'silly thing'—

> 'To keep their minds to moop and mel
> Wi' flowers o' credit like themsel'.

The 'hives' would tend to keep the bees at home, and the clovers and other plants would run less risk of foreign impregnation. But how about the butterflies? Set a lot of nice girls to catch 'em. They will thread their way among the clovers as dexterously as they do along the dalliance paths surrounded by violets and daffodowndillies. They would rival and perhaps excel the dreams even of that ardent young gentleman who wished he'd 'been a Butterfly born in a 'bower,' in order that he might spend his time in

> 'Roving for ever from flower to flower,
> Kissing all girls that are pretty and sweet;'

or to give his wish classic immortality—

> 'Floribus advolans, avolans, osculo
> Puellas tangèns, quæ suave olent!'

The point is really worth considering.

Sir Thomas Browne, in that remarkably curious book 'Religio 'Medici,' observes, 'There are two Books from whence I collect 'my Divinity; besides that written One of God, another of his 'Servant Nature, that universal and publick Manuscript that lies 'expans'd unto the Eyes of all.' May I 'rush in,' and, in an addendum, say that you and those like unto you whose avocations consist in the breeding and rearing of animals, and in the raising of crops which subserve the needs of man, of that Book of Nature you open, or ought to open, some of those pages most full of meaning? And, furthermore, I will say that it has always been to me a matter of

surprise that agriculturists or farmers—for I like the old term best—have disregarded as if things beneath their notice some knowledge of the nature of plants, of botany, and of natural history. They would think it a reproach if told they did not know as much, or nearly as much, about wheat as any miller; of barley as any maltster; of oats as any stableman; of beeves and sheep as any butcher—yet in matters hardly inferior to these in importance they place themselves to a great extent at the mercy of any dishonest knave who may be disposed to palm off upon them fictitious or killed seeds, or worthless manures; and unless they go to the expense of calling to their aid the 'opinion' or 'analysis' of some self-styled 'Professor,' they render themselves liable to imposition. Now, the acquisition of a sufficient knowledge of botany, of the nature, habitat, nutrient or poisonous properties of the various plants and vegetables with which they have to deal, might be acquired in a very few hours. I know no science of which the fundamental elements can be learned so quickly, or retained so long in the memory, as botany; nor is any research more fascinating and attractive in its nature, for the knowledge when once acquired is a perpetual source of enjoyment not seldom of solace and occasionally of profit. It was necessary for me between thirty and forty years ago to acquire some sort of proficiency in this branch of knowledge, as well as of several other cognate sciences, which are supposed to embellish or render assistance to the science of medicine, and of them all this is the only one in regard to which the memory has not faded, and that even without having been kept in repair except such renewal as it might obtain from my rambles through the fields, and in my wanderings in the lanes, where—

> 'Not the lightest leaf but trembling teems
> With golden visions and romantic dreams.'

## TEMPORA MUTANTUR.

JANE GREY, on reading Greek intent,
The morning hours in study spent;
Old Ascham tells us that no sight
Ere filled his heart with such delight,
As when, the others all afield,
With hound and hawk, he found conceal'd
Within her bower that maiden fair,
Companion none save Plato there.
What now-a-day would Ascham say,
Could he again pass by this way,
If all the other inmates gone
A-hunting, he should find the one
Lone lady left within the hall
Preparing for a fancy ball,
Not reading Greek, but in her room,
Intent upon a Greek costume?

# CLUBS.

THERE never was a time when there were more clubs in London than at present. They are of all kinds—political, literary, artistic, social, professional, sporting, and otherwise. Luxuries abound, but it is a question whether more comfort could not be obtained if there was a little less show and ambition and greater simplicity. A fine dining-room, ill-ventilated and pervaded by a strong smell of dinner, is not an appetising place, no matter how many servants there are to wait on you, plus a good cook.

Some few years since a friend put my name down at the principal club as member, during a short visit at Brussels. It was not an eating and drinking club according to our notions, but simply a place of resort for amusement. The saloon was a very fine room, well-ventilated and little crowded with furniture. There were several billiard and card-tables, and settees and rout seats were placed round the room. According to continental custom any one smoked who pleased, but the ceiling was lofty and there was little smell of smoke. Opening out of the first was another large room, which was used for exhibition of pictures, concerts, balls, meetings, &c. It seemed that the club carried out its intention admirably, which was to give facilities for friends to meet and enjoy themselves as they pleased ; they could play for any stakes they chose, however low, and they were quite untrammelled by the conventionalities of life as we are.

It has often struck me that a general club on a large scale would pay very well in London if the attractions were confined to a large room for general amusement such as that which I described at Brussels, a large reading-room with a good library, periodicals, and things of that kind, a good room for eating and drinking supplied by a contractor who would furnish the best of everything that could be grilled—just as they used to at Evans's when Paddy Green was king—cold meat, salads, and other simple refreshments, the object being that those who wanted to dine or lunch could do so without any form or ceremony. Besides the above requisites there should be a good business room which would accommodate a small meeting, in which secretaries might keep their despatch boxes ; and the club might be made the head centre for cricket, rowing, athletics, bicycle, football, fishing, and many other clubs. The club must necessarily be purely cosmopolitan, and the tariff should be reasonable, and the position of it should be central—Covent Gardenwards, for instance.

There is a certain amount of cliquism in many clubs now, and someting like bullying in the card- and billiard-rooms. A., B., C., and D. play pool perhaps five days a week ; they know the table by heart and are pretty good players ; but if E., D., F., G. want to play occasionally for the amusement of the game, and suggest a lower stake, the *habitués* either won't play, or protest in such a disagreeable manner, that any attempt to participate in the game would be a nuisance

instead of a pleasure. Just so in the card-room. If four players sit down by consent to play for a small stake for their own amusement, after two rubbers, two members who are regular players claim their right to 'cut in'; and should your stakes be lower than those usually played, you are pretty sure to hear of it in the shape of a protest or a refusal to play. Clubs ought to be more like a private hotel where people can do as they please. I belonged for some years, when in London, to an excellent club composed of members whose incomes varied from many thousands a year down to a hand-to-mouth income earned by some young artist or author who was living by what he could make by his pen or pencil from month to month. But the qualification for that club was neither rank nor money nor birth (though there were plenty in that club representing all these); the qualification was having worked in art or letters. The principle on which the club was founded was social enjoyment for all at a moderate tariff, and the pool play was limited to threepenny counters, which the players bought of the markers; and I have seen in that room as much good play, and as much fun, and as much good company as any one could desire, which company included some of the very first authors and artists in the world. It was a maxim of the club that there should be no gambling, so every one played pool or whist openly without reproach; whereas, in some clubs now a regular frequenter of the billiard- or card-room is looked on by the steady old members as a gambler, and possibly with some reason —because, when members play for stakes of importance, betting sometimes will range high.

By all means let individuals do as they please to amuse themselves, but let other individuals do as they please too, and let them enjoy the excitement of a game without gambling. Cards and billiards, in moderation, are noble amusements, and betting is wonderfully good fun; but to make them noble amusements and good fun people must work within their means. I know of no better fun at a cricket match than making a sixpenny or even a penny book on every point of the game as it progresses, and giving or taking the odds upon all kinds of improbable events. When any one is tired mentally, nothing will do him more good than to play a game of billiards or cards for stakes well within his means. 'Well within his means' may mean sovereigns to one man, penny counters to another; but there is no earthly reason why four well-bred gentlemen should not, if they please, play cards for penny counters, or silver threepenny whist, and play a good game too; or why they should not play shilling or threepenny pool with counters, and play well. Any theory to the contrary can only be based on the principle that 'the money makes the gentleman'; and Heaven knows how hard we ought to fight, in these days, without intermission against that error. If any one wants proof thereof, let him, in senate, public meeting, or elsewhere, listen to many prominent speakers; and—should he have had thirty years' experience in London—let him compare the Queen's English as he remembers it of thirty years ago and also the manners of that time

with the Queen's English of to-day and the manners of some of 'the rough riders' who have plenty of money, who wish to put all England straight in their own way.

These remarks carry one back to other things as well, except and always excepted 'The Marylebone Cricket Club,' which combination of four words means to express the law-makers of cricket and the representative club of the cream of English cricket, and which on non-match days is purely a practice club, why, when a ground is subscribed for and paid for by members should it not be their own? Of course, gate money affords a great help, but the gate money is as much the property of the Club as the money paid at the doors is the property of the lessee or manager. Granted instantly that important matches made for the 'County 'club and ground' must be arranged and be public matches, I want to know, when the ground and its belongings are the property of the members, why any eleven members should not make a match against any other club styling themselves 'an Eleven of the Blank 'County Club.' It strikes me very forcibly that names of counties are 'seized' and attached to clubs the active members of which are many of them unknown and uncared for to a great extent; and much private jobbery goes on, to the exclusion of the best-mannered and most efficient cricketers who would support a county eleven with money to the best of their power, and also by their good example of punctuality, strict obedience, and good breeding. Nothing is more absurd than seeing a fine cricket ground lying idle day after day in fine summer weather, simply because matches cannot be made and played without the sanction of a small committee; but this is so in very many large clubs.

Reverting again to the 'bye' matches, why should not eleven lawyers, or commercial men, or civil service men, as the case may be, challenge each other and give the secretary notice that they want a ground on such a day, paying a reasonable sum, just as one would at a club for a billiard-room or card-table? The *sic vos non vobis* seems to be the ruling principle of too many, and many clubs are much over-governed. Clubs, and the first members to form a club being caught, and the club being formed, the ruling party get too strong, and as it were (according to the old adage) they start 'booted and spurred' to ride the members, who on joining find themselves 'saddled and bridled.' Without the remotest wish to 'crack up' (to use a common slang expression) any particular club, let any one see what the success of Prince's Racquet Club has been. It so happens that I was at the place when it was a wilderness, and one court only was erected, so I know it from the beginning of its career. Now, Mr. Baily, the real secret of the success was founded on one basis, and that is the best basis in the world, namely, 'good breeding.' As all the world knows, the members consist of all classes, from the Prince of Wales downwards. The qualification for membership was supposed to be, belonging to either House of Parliament, the bar, army, navy,

civil service, or being an old university or public school man. The result is that vulgar ill-bred fellows could not get in. I can only say, in six years' experience, that I never heard so much as a contradiction to one another between any two members; and it mattered not whether you were a duke or any one else, you had the full enjoyment of the club, and your court, which you bespoke, was your private property against all the world.

Some years since I was staying at a house in Yorkshire during the Leger week, and after dinner a rubber was proposed late in the evening. Including myself, there were four of us. The three other gentlemen preferred to play four instead of playing 'dummy' (which word, I believe, ought to be 'dumb-y'), and urged me to join, and they said they played only 'low' stakes—guinea points, and five guineas on the rubber. The other three had a perfect right to play those stakes, as they were the regular stakes which were played in houses in that part of the country amongst the class of men with whom I was staying. Outspoken, I told them at once that I never would play higher than silver three-pennies; and the host, like a well-bred gentleman, said, 'As we want my friend to 'play in preference to playing dummy, and he is obliging us, one of 'us must play his stakes, and whoever is in his corner has the option 'of betting ten guineas on the rubber instead of five.' It so happened that I had wonderful cards and luck, and as we played six rubbers—changing every two rubbers—one unfortunate gentleman who cut in on the wrong side lost sixty guineas in bets; but the whole thing was a joke; guineas were the ordinary counters of the party, and at the end of the year little probably was won or lost.

Now I call this a specimen of amusement and good breeding combined. These men enjoyed themselves in their own way, and the loser was perfectly happy.

This story is bringing me round to my old point. The object of a club is that a number of persons should combine to promote and support some places of meeting where the luxury of a good private house should be given, with many amusements for all which few private houses can afford—and I for one say that the end has never been attained yet.

What in France are the most harmless amusements—such as cards and billiards—are 'tabooed' to the majority of the subscribers, because (quoting Thackeray from memory) Colonel Spot and Major Cannon monopolise the billiard-room; also because Mr. Grumpy and Mr. Hardup, their friends, monopolise the card-room, and, being a sort of licensed bores, growl at you because you did not lead a trump or put on your deuce instead of your knave, and, in fact, make themselves disagreeable when they can't win.

Now comes the moral of this. I am a clubbable man, and hardly ever touch a cue, and never a card, in a club, on account of the whims of the ruling party, and I venture to say that my theory represents the wishes of hundreds and thousands of those who are more than anxious to pay a reasonable sum for the harmless pleasures

of life in a club, from which they are shut out, owing to the wilfulness of some who make those things, which are really the pleasures of life, their business, and who by dictation as to what should be done and what should not be done (just as it suits them), create for themselves a false position, and deprive all who wish for a little harmless pleasure and enjoyment of what they want.

I was once a party to a serious practical joke at an inn in Kent which all turned out right in the end. There was a large room in the house where the principal tradesmen in the town met every evening at nine o'clock in their club-room, and the perpetual chairman was a dear old gentleman of about eighty years of age, dressed in black shorts, black stockings, and Pickwickian black gaiters, who was senior alderman, and probably the last man in England who wore powder and a small pig-tail, almost imperceptible. There was a round table in front of a comfortable fire, and about fifteen Windsor arm-chairs were arranged ready for the members. I was staying with an old schoolfellow at the barracks, and after mess we went down into the town, a party of six or eight (and this was in the days when a good deal of wine was consumed at dinner), and took possession of the old fogeys' chairs. As the clock struck nine the old alderman arrived and hung up his hat and took off his spencer—a kind of a jacket over his coat—and hung it up, and turning round caught sight of our party in the fogeys' sanctuary. The poor old boy gave a look which I shall never forget, and went back and took down his hat and spencer and fairly groaned. One of the officers, who was a very good fellow, went up to him and made a very ample apology, and said that we had carried out the joke too far, but the old boy would not be pacified for some time, and in the meanwhile other members had arrived. At last he said 'You are 'a lot of impudent boys, and now you are here you had better stop.' And stop we did, and a very pleasant evening we had too, and the old alderman, who had been a volunteer during the Peninsular war, came out like a man, and for the first time in his life almost stayed an hour beyond his usual allowance.

*Mitcham.* F. G.

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## THE LAST LEAP.

It was five-and-twenty years ago that they bought him, the grand old horse who had just astonished the field by his last leap. A generation had passed away since Tom Cooper pulled him out as the best of his drove at a great South-country fair, and with shouting voice, flying handkerchief, and rattling hat, sent him forth with head and tail erect on his mission of captivating the gaping crowd and finding a purchaser. Poor Tom! what a salesman he was, and what rare horses he used to bring over in those days, ay, and sell them at prices that did not preclude a man of even moderate means, who had eyes to see, securing a good hunter. He is gone (for he sleeps at the bottom of

the Irish Channel, with four hundred pounds' worth of horses around him, wrecked one stormy night as he was coming over with his string), and so are the horses, for as much is asked, ay, and given too, for a little scrubby pony now, as would have bought the best of his drove then. He recked little of the deterioration and scarcity of horses, and never lived to see it, though he had not been many years beneath the tossing waves ere the dearth began. Never a better did he land on English soil than the slashing sixteen-hand bay who is now the subject of my tale. A rattling price, as he considered, poor fellow, did he ask for him, as at halter's length, snorting defiance to his tormentors, he trotted with bounds like a deer till a jerk of the halter brought him short up on his haunches, and he stood scared and trembling at the strange sights and sounds that surrounded him. There was one amongst that crowd, however, that price would not stop, or fences either, though three score and ten had come and gone since he first saw daylight. He came for the pick of the drove, and the pick he meant to have, so that few words were wasted ere the bay was started on his long journey to the place that was to be his home for years. He soon gave them a taste of his quality and established a right of free warren over the whole neighbourhood, from the simple reason that they could not make fences big enough to keep him in. How we used to like to watch the two-year-old walk up to gate after gate and tip over them with all the ease of a deer, and count on the way we should take the shine out of them when he was broken and in condition. His time soon came, for on that place neither man nor beast ate the food of idleness; and what a wild one he was! It was no child's play, on a cold, bad scenting day, to spend hour after hour in the dreary woodlands where his lot was cast, but there were some of us right glad to put up with it for the sake of pounding our dearest friends over a big bit of timber when hounds did run. Little we thought or remembered then of the rampant, half-frantic beast that would have pulled our arms out of their sockets all the morning had we not ridden on the give-and-take plan, and by aid of Chifney's silken rein system, and patience at which we sorely wonder now, kept him a little within bounds. Time calmed him down, and then, even ere his first purchaser was succeeded by his son, what a hunter was there for those who had the luck to ride him, for he could gallop like a race-horse in addition to his wonderful powers of jumping. Never was horse before, I believe, ridden and larked as was; how many gates he jumped in a day, and how many park palings in a season, would be treated simply as fables did I relate them. No matter then whether hounds ran or not, there was always some fun, and he must have run as many steeplechases home in private as old Vivian did in public. 'Ginger was hot i' the mouth' in those days, and we made the most of our cakes and ale while it lasted. Staid middle-aged men, fathers of families, whose polls are got grey and waistcoats portentous, and whom an earldom would scarcely get to face a sheep-hurdle now—fellows who fear gout and dread indigestion—then

took their timber and their port with equal disregard of consequences. What a little time ago it seems that the writer of this was chucked jockey fashion on to the bay's back because he would stand for no one to mount him, and yet the old horse (he was 'the 'old horse' for years) is gone, and I am, to put it mildly, certainly not improved either in figure or nerve. No doubt I am a fogey and a potterer, but then A., B., and C. potter also, their game is played out as well as mine, and the memory of past fun is about all that is left to us. We must soon follow the old horse, that is certain, and as a noted driving man once said when asked where his well-known pair of greys were, 'I hope in heaven'; may we meet our old friend there also.

Time went on, and the bay altered as much as we did; he dropped from the covert-side to the shafts, and a fresh generation of riders arose who knew little of him or his exploits, which lived on in tradition alone. If he did occasionally appear at the meet under his master, perchance some old friend would point to them and say, 'Look at that man 'and horse; you'd little think, to see them now, that a few years ago 'no one in the hunt could pound them.' The change was not brought about without some sort of protest against the degradation of leather on the old hunter's part. He would stand on his hind legs when he ought to have gone quietly into his collar, and more than once people on the back seat of a dogcart have found their position as untenable as that of the Russians across the Balkans. But he never kicked, and soon settled down into as rare a trapper as he had been hunter. In fact he wanted no driving, and his owner has said of him, that on a dark night when you could not see your hand before you, it was only to give him his head and he'd to take you home.

At length, however, the efficiency even in harness seemed to be somewhat impaired, the ten mile an hour pace dropped to seven, the gaily arched crest began to wane and lose its muscle, grey hairs came on head and mane, and the hollows above the eyes showed as plainly as did the lengthened teeth that old age was overtaking with giant strides one of the boldest and best that ever bore pigskin or looked through leather. 'The old horse is about done,' or, 'I must soon 'look out for something to put in the old boy's place,' were phrases ever on the lips of his master. Yet he still hung on, and did his work cheerfully if slowly.

It was in mid-winter, just about this time, that a young friend came to pass a few days with the said master, and have a little hunting. Soon after his arrival the crack pack of the country were at their crack fixture, for which the best in the stud were reserved. The morning was just what all hunting mornings should be, but, alas! are not; one of those which make it a pleasure even to ride to covert; an exhilarating day, in which it requires great moral courage and resolution to keep from 'larking,' taking short cuts, or doing any of the hundred and one foolish things which the unwise are continually perpetrating, and men of understanding studiously avoid. The friends started in the frame of mind vouch-

safed to those who have the immediate prospect of pleasure before them; but, alas! that black care which, according to Horace, sits behind the horseman, was not so far from the cantles of their saddles as they imagined. Scarcely a mile had been covered ere the visitor's horse fell so lame that to proceed was impossible, and to get him home a work of no little difficulty—one of those provoking lamenesses that come on without rhyme or reason, and the cause for which it is so hard to discover. There, however, it was, that was a fact there was no disputing; and another equally disagreeable fact was, that there was nothing in the stable to fall back upon, for neither one nor the other were owners of large studs. What hunters they owned had recently undergone hard days, and were by no means fit to come again so soon; so that it was with rueful countenances that they sat consulting what was to be done.

'Rasper might come again,' suggested the guest, but the host shook his head, and reminded him of the filled foreleg, and how very gingerly he had run out that morning. No, it would not do; it was very certain that to ride him would be to reduce him to the state of his stable companion. Then the grey's back was so tender that to put a saddle on him yet would be to risk throwing him up for a month or more. The host was in no better situation; he had no horse but the one he was on, and which he offered to give up to his friend, a thing which the latter would by no means hear of.

'Well,' said he at length, running his eye over his friend, 'you 'aren't very heavy, and the old horse might carry you to the meet 'and back without falling down. It is a pity you should not see 'our crack pack, and the pick of the country, if you cannot see the 'run.'

No sooner said than done; they returned as quickly as they could, and the old horse once more felt the pigskin and big plain snaffle that had been strangers to him for years. The delay caused them to be late at the meet, so that when they arrived the hounds were already in covert, and people were more intent on getting a good start for themselves than criticising their neighbours' horses; hence the appearance of the ancient bay in the field again escaped all notice for the time, even amongst those who were old enough to remember his former prowess. The Master, who hunted his own hounds, was one of the quiet sort, and the covert a largish woodland, so that every one had enough to do to know what was going on, and keep within a respectable distance of the hounds as they drew.

A very good guide, however, was the old horse's owner, who had hunted there from boyhood, and he said to his friend, 'If we find 'here, the fox is pretty well sure to break at yonder corner where 'the first whip is, with such a wind as this, and we had better get 'on there quietly; but we must keep out of sight, or the Master will 'be down on us with one of his cutting remarks, that are ten times 'worse to bear than a blowing up, if he finds of it.' Accordingly they took up a position well within the covert, and out of sight, but which gave them a commanding view over that side of the country,

about forty yards from Jack, the whip. In a quarter of an hour or so a hound spoke, then another, and almost before they had caught the sound Jack, with a sort of involuntary motion, raised his cap from his head and held it aloft, though as far as he knew there was no one to see it. 'He has got a view,' said the host. 'Keep quiet, 'and we shall see him in a minute.' True enough they did; for as he spoke a beautiful dog-fox came into sight, striding across the large field of young clover that bounded the covert. As soon as he was well over the fence Jack replaced his cap, and gave a 'view halloa' that made the old horse prick his ears and snatch at his bridle. 'Now,' said the host, 'there is a green lane runs from here to —— nearly 'straight; if you get into it and trot along you can see most of the 'fun so far, and we will then determine what can be done after-'wards.' Almost as he spoke the hounds broke covert with a crash of music like a brass band, and then, dropping their sterns, raced away mute as mice, for the day had not belied its character, and there was a burning breast-high scent. Our friend made the best of his way to the green lane, and was about to open a gate into it, when to his astonishment he found himself safe and sound on the other side; the old horse had jumped it. 'By Jove,' thought he, 'I must have a cut in presently, if you jump like that;' and who could wonder, for away on his right they were running best pace over the open. In fact, to use the words of Parson Louth—

> 'They found in such style, and went off at such score,
> That he couldn't resist the desire to see more,'

and scuttled away up the lane at a rattling pace in his anxiety to keep them in view. Alas! for a time it was all in vain, for, bearing more and more to the right, an intervening hill at length hid them from view, and he was fain to pull up and trot along steadily, thinking the fun was over for the day, and cursing the luck which kept him out of it and put him on an old broken-down screw, just when he had thought his best horse so well and fit to go. He was nearing the covert his friend had spoken of as a likely point for them to make to, where he determined to pull up and wait, knowing he was well down wind, when his nag pricked his ears and again quickened his pace; then the light notes of hounds running in the distance were borne on his ear, and very quickly the figures of three or four horsemen rose up against the sky-line. Quietly he pulled up in the shelter of a high hedge, and scanned the country to try and catch a view, but in vain, for the old dog-fox so took advantage of hollows and hedgerows that, although he must have gone within a hundred yards, not a glimpse did he catch of him.

The hounds were quickly there also, and with them the Master, and just a few of those who had been able to live in the first flight. The first to arrive, of course, was the whip—in fact, it was his intention to have preceded the fox, and cut him off from the covert, which he knew was full of pug's relations and friends, had his nag's pace been equal to the task, but hard and quick as he came to his point, the

turn away behind the hill, when he unadvisedly left the straight course to take his place once more with the pack, beat him, and though he strained every nerve to rectify his mistake, and recover lost ground, when he arrived 'bloody with spurring, fiery hot with speed,' it was all too late, and the fox was already in the depths of one of the thickest coverts in the hunt, though, fortunately, it was not a very large one. As the earths were all stopped, Jack of course made his way to the far side, and there waited, well out of sight, to see that the hounds did not go away with a fresh fox, and leave their hunted one behind them. Thither the rider of the old horse also followed him. Round the wood like a hurricane the pack drove three or four times, making the trees ring again, and bringing down the few withered leaves that the November frosts and rains had spared. Presently a fox reaches the edge of the covert, looks cautiously round, and, seeing the coast clear, breaks over the open. Our friend has hunted enough to know that a halloa given too soon will head him, but not long enough to know a fresh fox from a hunted one, so as soon as he is out of sight he pulls himself together to give a rattling 'Gone away,' but Jack has his eye on him, makes a gesture for silence ere it can come out, and then says, 'That ain't our fox, sir; you sit quiet, and leave the holleren 'to me, and you will see the hunted one in a minute.' A few more anxious moments, and away goes a second, but Jack still sits like a statue, with a quiet smile on his countenance, as much as to say, 'I have got your photograph for another day when we want you, 'my friend, but you may go now.' Round come the pack again, and as they near the outside the hunted fox, tired and stiff, with arched back, lolling tongue, and drooping brush, makes his appearance, and sets his head for the open to seek another shelter. Ere he is ten yards from the boundary ditch, Jack goes at him, cracking his whip, and shouting 'Tally-ho!' as if he meant to catch him and eat him, and the poor brute faces short back to the covert again. It appears nothing can save him now, the pack are nearly at the edge of the covert as he slips in, and with them before him, and Jack behind, die he must, as no doubt the latter intended he should. But no! instead of the smothered worry he expected, the leading hounds flash out on the line, and he meets them with a 'Tally-ho 'back! get away back!' and a rate or two. A young one is opening on another line in the covert, and to him they all go with a rush; while the whip, uttering curses, not loud but deep, goes also to try and get to their heads again. What had become of the hunted fox? Why, finding himself in the midst of his foes, he dropped into a deep drain, just inside the covert, crawled under the brambles, and there waited until they had been twice over him, then made his point good, and was away for another stronghold, three miles off, where there was a head of earths. The stranger, however, who was so thunderstruck at what he thought was the insane proceeding of Jack (being under the impression that hunting foxes, and not murdering them, was what people went out for: he did not know, as Jack

did, that the country beyond was very heavy and stiff, and the latter's horse a bit of a musician), that he had not moved, now made amends to himself for his enforced silence. In fact, he made such a row that he soon had huntsman, whips, and hounds all round him, and an old bitch hitting the line, they were away, almost before he could answer the queries as to what he had seen. Then came another rattling ten minutes, for those who were quick enough to get a start, and finally half a dozen of them reached one of those nasty deep lanes which are the curse of the country; they are bad to get into, unless you find a gate handy, or fall, which is certainly the quickest method of reaching them, but still worse to get out of; a deep ditch, an upright bank as high as village church, and a stiff fence on the top want doing, you must allow, even with a swing at them, but try it out of a crowded narrow lane, and see what exertion it takes to get over. Into one of these places the hounds ran with their fox almost in view, and out again on the opposite side, and into it the few still holding a place followed them, by means of a convenient gate. 'Now, who gives us 'a lead out?' said the Master, on his second horse, a question the stranger answered by landing the old bay quietly on the bank, and then over the stiff live beech hedge on the top, scarcely touching a twig. 'Well, we must go if that old trapper can jump 'it,' said the Master again, taking hold of his brown, and giving him a very strong hint with the Latchfords. A big jump at the bank, a heavy crash through the fence follow, the M.F.H.'s boots are seen describing a kind of catherine-wheel by those in the road, and they have a capital view of the brown's hind shoes and tail while he is disentangling himself from the strong growers. Half a mile on the game good fox succumbs to his fate, after as smart a gallop as has been seen in the country for years, and once more, and for the last time, the old bay has landed his rider first at the finish. The Master came next, declaring he was never more deceived in his life at being so got down, and the rest, having found a gate out of the lane as well as into it, crept up *longe intervallo*, with open nostrils and shaking tails. The Master had to conduct the obsequies himself, for Jack was busy, a mile or two back, supporting his horse's head until he could be dug out of a deep boggy drain, and the owner of the bay had never been in the second burst at all. The fence out of the lane was the old horse's last leap. He never felt pigskin again, and ere another hunting season came round, had become so feeble, that he died as all hunters should do, and passed the ordeal of the kennel boiler, thus giving no one the opportunity, had they been so minded, to place R. I. P. over his remains. The Master of the hounds has, however, not yet forgotten the fence out of the lane, and occasionally has to endure a little good-humoured chaff at having been got down by the old trapper.

# ALL ABOUT THE CRACK OF A WHIP.

THERE is in one of the beautiful down country districts in England a church, and to that church there is a parson; also two churchwardens, and under their special guardianship there are five litters of fox cubs within a mile of the church. The poultry bills being carefully attended to, the life of a fox is held sacred by all, except the huntsman and the hounds, who at the proper times and seasons carry out the sentence of sporting law, and return triumphant with the brush, the pads, and sometimes the head of Mr. Reynard deceased, if he has died very game and deserves immortality. Being myself tied to London from October till August, it is thirty-one years ago—when on a short visit in the late Mr. Assheton's country, at Easter—since I set eyes on a pack of hounds until the early part of last September, when I heard the crack of a whip about 7 o'clock, A.M., and on looking out of the window I beheld a noble pack of hounds coming down a lane, and the red coats of the huntsmen and whips (who were coming along at that peculiar ambling trot known only to huntsmen and whips) appearing and disappearing between the trees. How many years did that crack of the whip and the sight of the huntsmen and the hounds throw me back, to days when I was a child, about the height of the hounds, and saw the same sight, and remarked to my nurse, 'What a many dogs.'

The huntsmen drew up in front of the vicarage garden, to inquire after the health of the cubs, and to show his hounds to the parson's children, and to arrange about the parson taking a puppy on walk for the winter; and then, on as fine a September morning as ever came out of the heavens, we went on foot for a mile to some rising ground above the coverts where some of the wards of the church were supposed to be, and were joined by the two churchwardens, who never neglect their secular duties. The farmers, one and all, agreed that times were never so bad; but somehow they were most of them pretty well mounted, and one of the churchwardens, whose hospitality is only exceeded by the heartiness of his welcome, has a stackyard and a supply of agricultural machinery the value of which I should remarkably like to put into my pocket.

When the Dutch first went to New York, according to Knickerbocker's history, they hailed the inhabitants in Low Dutch, the consequence of which was that the aborigines retired into the woods, and were never heard of again. I believe that if any one were to trust me with the horn, I should make such an infernal blast that every hound would put his tail between his legs, and howl with anguish and cut home; or if any one were to intrust me with a lot of gamecocks for the purpose of fighting a main, I should not have the remotest idea what to do with them, and I think I should turn the lot into the lions' den in the Zoo, with two or three amorous hens, and let them fight it out. I know nothing about field sports, except cricket and fishing (if the latter can be called a field sport), or finding game with a good dog, after the manner of our fathers. I distinctly state that in writing this I do not pretend to any knowledge

of the noble art of hunting, and I am writing about something of which I know next to nothing. I was not 'called on to oblige 'on the horn' (as the cads say), and had there been any necessity for a volunteer, there was a grand old man on horseback on the hill, by whose horse I was standing, who would have given a good blast of a horn, and have found a fox and have killed him even against the Rev. J. Russell; and I should like to see my old friend and the distinguished parson whose biography you are publishing hunt a good pack on alternate days for a week. I think my old friend's fingers itched to handle the horn and work the covert. By-the-by, the Rev. J. Russell, in connection with his biography in 'Baily,' came on the *tapis*, and a story was told of him as follows: He took a service for a friend in a strange parish, and the parish clerk apologised for not having an appropriate hymn, not knowing that the old sportsman was coming; and he said, 'If I had knowed as you 'were a-coming, Parson Russell, I should have had the hymn—

> 'As pants the hart for cooling stre*a*ms (streams)
> When *hated* (heated) in the *cheuce* (chase).'

I saw my veteran old huntsman in church on Sunday. He is in his 85th year, and it would puzzle any one to find a haler, more upright old man, or a more thorough nature's gentleman. Health is written on his face. I called on him the next day, and as it was raining hard he was amusing himself by sawing wood, and his account of himself is that he cannot find words to express his thankfulness for his wonderful health and strength. He was huntsman to the Duke of Grafton, the Hon. Grantley Berkeley, and the late Mr. Assheton Smith. Over the mantelpiece of his comfortable sitting-room, which is ornamented by more than one brush of a gallant fox, and a head or two of those foxes which have earned immortality, hangs, framed and glazed, a five-pound note which the Prince of Wales, when a young man, gave him on the occasion of his hunting with the Tedworth hounds. Need I say that his name is George Carter? He has had seventeen children, and I believe, almost without exception, all the sons are huntsmen or whips. Now don't you envy me (who know nothing of foxhunting), Mr. Baily, my first, and probably my last, lesson in foxhunting from the lips of that old Nimrod as I stood by his horse's bridle? Upon my word, when I saw the figure of that grand old man on his horse on that fine autumn morning, on the hillside, standing out against the sky-line of the magnificent downs, which look like a solid Atlantic, over which he had hunted so many hundreds of times, it was like the picture of the old Duke (by Landseer) on the field of Waterloo, describing the battle. Was it from etiquette I wonder—I never asked him—that he did not go down to the covert-side, but placed himself on an eminence a quarter of a mile off to view the battle from afar, without a semblance even of advising or interfering with his old hobby, which had reverted to a younger man?

'I don't think,' said my mentor, 'that they will get a cub away 'to-day, sir. They may kill one in covert, or rattle out an old fox.'

The words were scarcely out of his mouth when we saw something stealing along the hillside, a long way off, out of the covert. 'It is a hare! No, by Jove, it is a fox!' The churchwarden sighted him first, and when it was beyond doubt that it was a fox, the parson, who, when preaching, can be heard in the vicarage garden, gave the view holloa! in a voice which, like the beacon fire (*à la* Macaulay), might

'Have roused the shepherd of Stonehenge, the rangers of Beaulieu,'

and which was instantly responded to by the huntsman. But the old fox was too many, and with a very long start he slipped down a tremendous thick hedge, and probably returned to the place from whence he came.

There is no history attached to the hunting. The hounds killed one cub and drew two or three coverts, but as the old huntsman prophesied, they could not get a cub to break, though several were 'on foot.' And so, at 10 o'clock, a homeward movement was made, after satisfactory proof that there were plenty of foxes; and the huntsman having very judiciously drawn a covert belonging to the churchwarden, and near his house, last, it was the fault of every one who was out, whether lord or commoner—for they were both sorts—if he did not refresh the inner man with those creature comforts that only a good old-fashioned English farmhouse can provide.

Mr. Baily, where you find the most popular sport in a county innocently encouraged in the parish by those who are its natural guardians, you will generally find a quiet, well-appointed church, with a parson who never shirks his work, good schools, and no encouragement to vice or immorality in any way, and a total absence of cant, humbug, or controversy. A parson who encourages hunting and works with his farmers and parishioners, and a hunting parson, are two very different things. An occasional run with the hounds, and attending every meet to the neglect of the parish, are totally opposite to each other. Nothing does more good to cricket than having a parson or two on either side, and nothing gives a man more influence in a parish than falling in with the innocent pleasures which give so many employment and amusement. Only witness the happy faces as the hounds come through a village for the first time, and see the cottage doors all thrown open and hear the cry of 'Moother, moother, here be the hounds!' and watch the village beauty smooth her hair back and pretend not to see the second whip, who gives her what is 'carnally called' a knowing wink and a smile, and see her rush away from the door and reappear at an upper window which gives a more commanding view, for which action, doubtless, some odd 'tabby' might call her a 'bold minx.' Ay, hear and see these things, and don't tell me that innocent sports do not break the monotony of life amongst all classes.

Though, by-the-by, talking of neglect of parishes, I wonder what becomes of the parishes in which the over-righteous Puritan parsons,

who think all village sports the way to perdition, reside, when the incumbents come to London to blackguard the poor old Pope at Exeter Hall, or to convert the Chinese or the Ring-tailed Indians? They forget, possibly, that in their own parishes the cesspools are running into the wells, and that cottages are overcrowded, and people are dying of fever from neglect of social reform, whilst they are listening to their own voices in London, and gloating over their names in the papers—which excitements to them are exactly the same in effect as a run with the hounds, or a cricket match, is to others of their clerical brethren, who know their home duties and do them. They talk about the alarming spread of immorality in their parishes, in which, from the 1st of January till the 31st of December, they never promote any amusement whatever without addresses and psalm-singing, which—though very good in the right place—bore every one to death as a perpetual feast. It is the old story of *toujours perdrix*, *toujours la Reine*. These men, who, independently of their abhorrence of field sports, generally are guiltless of any taste for music, painting, or art, and who possess not an idea beyond droning through their noses, practically resign the parish to the beer-shop and skittle alley. These are the class who hold a candle to the devil by going to the Crystal Palace pantomime, in which the London ballet-girls in their questionable habiliments *qua* decency, according to the views of simple country folks, exhibit themselves, but who would not enter a London theatre to save their lives, and who look upon actors and actresses as 'booked.'

There is an anecdote of a parson's children which is perfectly true. The parson had a puppy on walk, and of course it was the pet of the children, and by the children's earnest entreaty the puppy was forgiven for a thousand peccadilloes, such as bringing all the boots and shoes, hair brushes, &c., out of the bedroom, and scattering them about the lawn. A gentleman meeting two little girls out with the puppy, said,

'Is that your puppy, Mabel?'

Mabel (*ætat* 7). 'No, it belongs to the hunt, sir, and we are 'keeping it till March.'

Gentleman. 'What is its name?'

Mabel. 'Wapid, sir' (Rapid).

[Mr. Baily, please observe that little pitchers have long ears, and repeat what they hear without knowing its meaning, or how could Edith, Mabel's sister, *ætat* 6, have volunteered the following remark?]

Edith—a matter-of-fact little woman—(thoughtfully). 'Yes, sir, 'Wapid by Wadical (Radical) *out of Needful!*'

So you see, Mr. Baily, through your kindness having been introduced to the Rev. John Russell last summer, and having again met my old friend George Carter, I have in one year 'held discourse,' as Mr. Pepys would say, with two of the greatest and oldest huntsmen alive.

*Mitcham.* F. G.

## 'OUR VAN.'

THE INVOICE.—January: Its Joys and Revels.

THERE are times and seasons, and this is one of them, when we feel thankful that the 'Van' is not a comic journal, one of those productions in which life is made to appear a huge jest, and the cares and worries thereof are entirely ignored. True, we must not be lugubrious in 'Baily,' but then we need not be gay unless the spirit moves us in that direction. And really the outer world, politically and socially, the world of Downing Street and St. Stephen's, and the world of the clubs, is not so lively that we can find anything in it to rouse our spirits and stir our imagination. The New Year's birth was not a festive occasion, however hard we tried to make it one. Shadows of doubt and perplexity were on men's minds; the good wishes for the season sounded hollow; there was a spectre at our banquets that would not be laid, and the thoughts of even that lounging, sauntering world which is bounded on one side by Hyde Park Corner, and the other by the Guards' Memorial—that world which spends its time as did the Athenians of old, in seeking and inquiring after some new thing—even this hardened community, in its intervals of whist, poker, nap, and loo, evidently felt that there was something wrong. The times, what with bloody war, commercial depression, strikes, and a terrible tightness in the money market, were out of joint, and the cursed spite was that the loungers and saunterers could see no way to setting it right. But then wiser heads than theirs found that a difficulty also.

The weather, too, was against us. Very charming for hunting men going like great guns with the Quorn, and the Pytchley, as well as in all countries where hound and horn are heard, but simply abominable for Londoners. *Their* woes are never, we believe, taken into consideration, however much they are expected to sympathise with Sir Harry Hieover and Lady Florry Firstflight, when they are driven up from Melton by the frost. It is generally expected of us poor Cockneys that we compose our faces to a decent sadness when Sir Harry in the smoking-room tells us of his string stopped in their work just as he had got them fit, or Lady Florry solacing herself by a fifth visit to the 'Pink Dominos,' or a box at the Alhambra (with a little supper at the Town House *in prospectu*), dilates on the women she has cut down, and the men she has knocked over—and now how her career of triumph is checked. A chapter might be written on the discomforts of Londoners in what is called 'fine open weather,' when like Noah's dove they find no dry place for their feet, and fog and mud are the masters of the situation. But who cares for Cockney disagreeables? Have they not their clubs, their theatres, their poker and their loo—these wretched beings who spend their lives in London streets? What matters it what becomes of them?

So we perforce fall back on the pleasures that are all our own. They are not bad. The 'Van' Driver has before in these pages expressed his liking for a stall in the fourth row from the front at the Alhambra as being a desirable position in which you can at the same time hear the charming melodies arranged by M. Jacobi (can he be Mr. Jacobs under that assumed name?), and see the colour of the *corps de ballet's* boots. It was at the close of an unusually dull day, and after a modest repast at that unfashionable restaurant, the Cow and Snuffers, that he found himself in his favourite position, prepared to take in the sights and sounds of 'Wildfire,' to listen to Mr. Harry Paulton's jokes, and the melodious *roulades* of Miss Pattie Laverne and Miss Lennox Grey, to watch the muse of the many twinkling feet who has for her

followers the bounding Pertoldi, the glissading Sismondi, while the displays of agility by those charming though minor divinities, Rosa, Richards, and Gillert, leave little to be imagined or desired. Apart from some lively and well arranged music, for which we are indebted to Offenbach, Lecocq, Hervé and Co., 'Wildfire' is one of the most brilliant spectacles which the Alhambra, so fertile in its splendid combinations of colour, so rich in legs and limelight, has ever exhibited. The ballet of the second act, 'les Gardes Françaises,' is about the very prettiest ballet ever seen. Whether the uniforms of the Gardes are historically correct we are unable to say. Much terpsichorean licence is no doubt allowable, but the red-coated and black-gaitered brigade struck us as very charming though at the same time dangerous opponents. We had occasion some two or three months back to comment not too favourably on the members of the *corps be ballet* taken as a body. There seemed to us a falling off, or perhaps we might more correctly say, a too great coming on—a redundancy in that form and figure which according to lady novelists ought to be 'lithe and lissome.' We are pleased now to add that this fault, if it existed, has been amended, and the Alhambra is itself again. Nothing beyond an agreeable plumpness meets the eyes of our dear friend Methuselah as with riveted *lorgnette* he follows the movements of the leading coryphées, inclines his eye now to the bounds of the little Richards, is entranced the next moment by the lighter touches of Rosa, the abandon of Gillert. Happy Methuselah! He only looks sad when the act drop falls. Then there is another ballet in the last act, gorgeous in gold and colour, but not to our thinking to be compared to that of the 'Gardes Françaises;' and then there is a transformation scene, after which all nice people come away. But 'Wildfire' is a thing to be seen.

Whether our playwrights and adapters of other men's goods are correct in supposing that English audiences of the present day are so puritanical that they will not bear the slightest reference to illicit passion, or forgive the slightest lapse in conjugal love, we much doubt. An experiment was made on our supposed susceptible feelings in this respect when Mrs. Bancroft gave us 'Peril,' and the weakness and frailties of poor humanity were represented with just a little toning down to pacify Mrs. Perkins and Mrs. Brown. True, the heroine meant no wrong. She only dabbled with her feet, so to speak, in the waters of lawless passion, and recovered herself in time.

> But when his wicked eyes appear,
> And when we know for what they winked so,
> One must be very stupid, dear,
> To let him hurt you; don't you think so?

The young gentleman in 'Peril' showed his 'wicked eyes,' and the lady extinguished him forthwith. Mrs. Perkins and Mrs. Brown were rather alarmed at one scene, but 'Peril' drew—not quite such a run as the 'Pink 'Dominos,' but still a very good one. In one of the last adaptations, however, that of 'Patrie' at the Queen's, the adapter feeling, we suppose, that the heroine Dolores was such an extremely out-and-out young woman—too bad for Mrs. Perkins and her friend—has made her an equally incomprehensible character. He has put into her mouth her brazen avowal that she is an adultress, but has made her lover solemnly contradict her; and in the last act the outraged husband forgives her, and she enters a convent an interesting penitent. This is the Dolores of 'Fatherland' our readers will of course understand, not the Dolores of M. Sardou, and no wonder that that accomplished dramatist feels indignant at the liberties Mr. Labouchere has taken with his play. Well was it remarked in the 'Athenæum' that

'a piece which has more genuine dramatic fibre than any play written during 'the last decade is thus converted into inanity.' It is indeed an admirable play, and even in the emasculated version which it is essayed to thrust down our throats at the Queen's, there is still left much to admire. Mr. Labouchere has pared the play down in places where the pruning-knife was not needed, and *vice versâ*. Much interesting matter has been excised, and some scenes quite unnecessary to the action of the plot have been retained. We wish we could speak in better terms of the acting, but with one exception, Mr. Herman Vezin's portrait of the Duke of Alva, the representation was most inadequate. The exigency of circumstances gave the part of Dolores to Miss Henrietta Hodson, an artiste who has often charmed us, as she will no doubt again, but here had a burden laid upon her which she was quite incapable of bearing. There was a monotonous representation of Count Rysoor, the husband, a very loud one of Karloo, the lover. Mr. Shiel Barry gave an artistic sketch of Jonas the bellringer, and we may add the drama is splendidly mounted. With a version more true to the original, and with a company adequate to the task of representing it, 'Fatherland' would have been a success. Mr. Labouchere, by the aid of advertisements and sneers at the critics, tries to make it one now. We trust he will attain his end.

We wanted something enlivening after 'Fatherland,' and so betook ourselves with two young and fair friends one bright morning to Alexandra Palace, where rumour told us we should see 'the best pantomime in London.' And rumour was right. It was in the first place rather surprising to see how bright and cheery the Palace looked in midwinter. To be sure, the sun was shining and flooding the central hall, the statues of the kings, the bare backed steeds in the hippodrome, the spangles of the Bounding Brothers of Bermondsey, the lions, the flaxen curls of 'Georgiana' with light, so we saw it under the most favourable circumstances. How snug and cheery looked the dining-room too, with its large fireplace, and where at a table near the window we prepared the inner man for the fatigues of the pantomime, and introduced our young friends to the excellent *cuisine* of Messrs. Bertram and Roberts. The view from the windows reminded us, bar the flowers on the terrace, of meets of the Four-in-Hand and C.C., and we half expected to see 'the Duke,' or 'Sugar' Candy, or Meysey Thompson, or 'Charley' Carington appear in the doorway. But they are thinking not of coaching yet, and are most of them going well with that other Duke down in Leicestershire, where the last three are very bad we hear to beat. But our young friends are glancing very anxiously at the clock; they want to miss not a line of St. George, or a whisk of the Dragon's tail, and not even the lightest and most delicate of omelettes will tempt them to dally longer at table. They dispose of their Pommery-Greno, though, let us do them that justice, and then we find ourselves in the well arranged stalls. A much prettier pantomime, or one better put upon the stage, we have rarely seen. *Our* pantomime days, in the true enjoyment of the term, are past, but still there is much to appreciate in good scenery, tasteful costumes, and not bad-looking women. The transformation scene—the flight of the swallows—is as near perfection as transformation scene can be, the idea poetical, and well carried out by the inventor. Moreover the harlequinade was really, thanks to the Paynes and Mr. John Lauri, laughable, and worth stopping for, instead of having to make a rush for it when the last pot of red fire is lighted in the transformation scene. The Alexandra pantomime is worth the journey there to see.

Of course the theatrical event of the month has been the production of 'Dora' under the title of 'Diplomacy' at the Prince of Wales's. That the

great expectations formed of it, as a play, have been quite realised is perhaps saying too much. The plot is a strained one, a fault that may be found with more than one of M. Sardou's brilliant comedies. The adaptation, too, of the gentlemen who under the pseudonyms of Bolton Row and Savile Row (thinly veiling Clement Scott and Charles Stephenson) have prepared 'Dora' for the Prince of Wales's, is open to the objection that though they have altered the names of some of the *dramatis personæ* and made them English men and women, they still remain essentially French. But with this our faultfinding, such as it is, ends. 'Diplomacy' is one of the cleverest dramas we have seen for some time on English boards. If the plot be strained, its skilful manipulation makes us half forgetful of the defect. Probably M. Sardou has no equal, certainly no superior, in construction. He revels in plot and counter-plot, delights in the wheel within wheel, is great in dexterous surprises, and when the knot looks most complicated, cuts it in the most unexpected way. The great scene, the *scène des trois hommes* as it was called in Paris, where Count Orloff has to relate his belief that he owns his arrest to the treachery of Dora, and has to relate it, too, to her husband, while the brother of the latter, the cool and skilful diplomatist, essays to act the part of mediator—one of the most telling and effective situations ever seen on the stage—is splendidly given, and never fails to rouse the house. Mr. Bancroft, Mr. Clayton, and Mr. Kendal, are its exponents, and we can hardly say which we admired most, perhaps Mr. Bancroft. He told his unpleasant story with wonderful forbearance. One could see that the words were being dragged out of him. Mr. Kendal was French more than English in his emotion; but still he went through his arduous *rôle* with a display of power such as we have never before seen in him. Mr. Clayton was admirable as the diplomatist. To say that Mr. Arthur Cecil as Baron Stein, the Russian spy, gave us a wonderful picture of a smooth villain under the guise of a gentleman is hardly saying enough. We ought to have called it a cabinet portrait, so finished is it in every detail. Mrs. Bancroft selected an unpleasant character, that of the adventuress Countess Zicka, but her genius triumphed over the difficulties and disagreeables, and we forgot them as we listened. Mrs. Kendal as Dora we have seen to greater advantage, but still she is charming in the tender and womanly passages. In the scenes with her husband she hardly touched the audience as she might have done. The small part of Algie Fairfax was rendered by Mr. Sugden as that actor does everything he touches, and Miss Le Thiere as the Marquise de Rio Zares had found a *rôle* which fitted her to a nicety. On the whole the acting was as near perfection as we can expect from one company, and that it was put on the stage in the completest manner need hardly be added. The world will need no bidding to flock to 'Diplomacy.' It has all the elements of a great success, and that rather dreadful thing to playgoers—a great run.

Mr. Mapleson has reopened Her Majesty's Theatre for a season of English opera, with a representation of Baron von Flotow's 'L'Ombra,' translated and adapted for the English stage by Gilbert á Beckett. It has been a popular work in Paris the last eight years; but whether its claims to merit will be fully appreciated here remains to be proved, for as yet opinions vary like those of doctors who disagree, and it is to be hoped the opera won't share the fate of the patient under the same circumstances. The scene of action is laid in Languedoc during the reign of Louis XIV., and the plot by this time will we think be familiar to most of our readers. It is very slight, and the libretto suffers much by translation; but the whole interest hinges on the escape from death of the young Count Rollescourt, and the incidents which befall him, under his assumed guise of sculptor and artist in a remote village to which he

flies for refuge. Here a young widow sets her cap at him, the doctor become his bosom friend, and the inevitable young heroine only is wanting, who, of course, chance brings to his door at the right moment. These four characters form the *dramatis personæ* of the opera, in which the comic element is well carried out by Madlle. Bauermeister, who represented the sprightly widow, and sang the leading part with correctness and skill. This lady possesses the style of a true artiste, and will be a valuable addition to the opera corps. Both she and Miss Purdy, who impersonated Giva, the heroine, are new to the London boards, and the latter lacks as yet what longer experience will no doubt give to her as an actress; but she was always graceful, her voice was full of pathos throughout, and the touching way she rendered the mezzo air, 'Hear my prayer,' met with a well-deserved *encore*. Mr. George Fox might do more with the buffo *rôle* of the doctor, and Mr. Talbo, as Count Rollescourt, did not make the most of his opportunities in a good part, though he has a nice tenor voice, and can sing the song allotted to him very fairly. 'The Phantom' (a misnomer, by-the-way, where there is nothing ghastly) is hardly likely to become so popular as our favourite 'Marta'; but there is much to recall that opera to one's mind in the overture, occasional *morceaux*, and the unaccompanied quartette, 'Approach, your places take,' which is delightfully piquant and harmonious. Mr. West Hill has his hands quite full with the orchestral accompaniments, and repetition will be an advantage to both band and those artistes who are not yet *au fait* in their parts. Meantime, we confidently recommend those who enjoy bright sparkling music, with plenty of melody interspersed, to book themselves forthwith for Herr von Flotow's 'Phantom.'

Another of Mr. Byron's three act farces has been produced this time at the Globe, with Mr. Toole as the happy exponent of the fun and absurdity of the hero. 'A Fool and his Money' is not perhaps the best title that could have been found, but it suffices, and the piece brims over with those jokes and puns, that overflow of high spirits that have contributed so much to the success of the author as a playwright. Mr. Byron is always in such good humour with himself, his situations are for the most part natural, and if he does make the actions of his heroes and heroines sometimes forced, the play-going public have learned to forgive it. In Chawles, a servant made heir to his late master's property, Mr. Toole has a part which he makes all his own. His attempts to become a resident landlord at a place with an unpronounceable name in Wales, the miseries he suffers at the hands of a 'bard,' his descriptions of hunting and other field sports which he tries to follow, his ambitious love-making to the daughter of a neighbouring squire while his heart is really given to an old fellow-servant, and finally the relief with which he bids good-bye to his riches and greatness to descend to a public-house and his Mary—all this is most diverting and excites peals of laughter. Of course Chawles is the prominent character, but Mr. Righton, as a poor and pompous old gentleman anxious to marry his daughter to a rich man, was fairly amusing. We are inclined to vote Mr. Toole's picture of the butler as one of his happiest efforts. The Globe is crowded every night.

It is three or four years ago, we believe, since the strains of Offenbach made fashionable remote Islington, and the whilom Philharmonic Music Hall was crowded with people from the West End to listen to Soldene singing the 'Balcony' duet, applaud tumultuously the 'Gensdarmes,' and be enraptured with 'Sara.' But all of this is very likely to occur again, for Mr. Charles Head has again assumed the command of affairs, and with the theatre newly decorated, with artistic scenery, splendid dresses, and a thoroughly efficient company, introduces the old favourite to us again. Miss Alice May is now

Drogan, and there is a very decided acquisition in Miss Alice Burville, who sang the music allotted to the Duchess with very telling effect, her vocalism being remarkably finished. M. Lorédan was not quite up to Marius in Charles Martel, but Mr. J. A. Shaw as the Duke, though hardly here and there perfect in one or two of the solos, sang the rest of the music in masterly style, and showed much humour. There are heaps of pretty women as pages, citizens, and maids of honour, and there are some wonderful French dancers. If we remember rightly, the late lamented Sara made her *début* at the Philharmonic, at all events it was her home for some time, and Mr. Head no doubt wisely judged that he could not do better than try and supplement the fair Jewess by something equally good. From what we saw of Madlles. Louise and Olga on the opening night, their style may fairly be described as 'eccentric' in the fullest sense of the word, and we may add that Sara 'would not have 'been in it,' as we say on the Turf, with her present successors. Everything went off with great *éclat*, and we think Mr. Head may be congratulated on the enterprise and liberality which he has exhibited in the undertaking. We hope to see the Philharmonic crowded as of yore.

There is no racing news, and 'nothing doing' is the stereotyped utterance of Albert Gate and the Victoria. The Derby is a dead letter, and the only event that excites a languid interest is the Croydon Hurdle Race. This wants a deal of fanning to, chiefly supplied by zealous sporting newspapers which go through the form of the favourites and essay to stir up would-be backers to a plunge. But backers appear to take a deal of stirring; and seeing that the race is not run until the 13th of March, they show, we think, an unwonted wisdom therein. Hesper and Scamp have been made the favourites in what betting there is, and Cannon is reported to be very fond of the former, going already like great guns at Newmarket. Some of the 'great guns,' by-the-way, have been nearly going off the hooks at the metropolis of the Turf, a strange sort of epidemic having gone through many of the stables. Matthew Dawson lost a promising young one, and fears were entertained at one time for some of the older celebrities, but we believe the plague has now been stayed. There is a rumour, but on what foundation we are ignorant, that Beauclerc will not run for the Derby, and there is the usual story of the 'clever' men who are always ready to lay. We really did not know that there were so many Derby books.

The Grand Military repeat their pleasant visit to Sandown this year, and the 8th and 9th of March is the fixture. The Household Brigade again join forces with their brethren of the cavalry and the line, and from the programme just issued by Messrs. Pratt and Barbrook, we have every reason to expect two good days' sport. Major Dixon, the Hon. Sec., has introduced some judicious attractions in the conditions for the Veteran Stakes, which we think will bear fruit. Non-commissioned officers and soldiers in uniform are to be admitted to the Park free—a liberal and graceful concession.

The Sandown Club has also issued its own programme for the year, and an ample and attractive one it is. Six meetings, as in last year; the first being fixed for the 26th and 27th of this month, comprise three of the club proper, while, as we have just mentioned, the soldiers will be there in March, and in addition their brethren of the Royal Artillery will hold their one day meeting on the 6th of April. Twenty-six acres of land have this year been added to the Park for the purpose of improving the course, and every attention had been paid to it by Mr. Hwfa Williams, the manager. Year by year does the popularity of Sandown Park increase, and the conviction gains ground that for the enjoyment of racing there is no place like it. The list of members, we see, has increased too, for the smart little volume just issued from

Messrs. Pratt and Barbrook's office is thicker by many pages than the one for last year. So Sandown flourishes.

Arrangements are being completed for the coaching season, which this year promises to be an unusually good one. The best news we have heard is that Mr. W. H. Cooper will again be on the road. Not wishing to interfere with the Dorking, which is now in the same hands as last season, he has joined Mr. Walter Shoolbred and Mr. Luxmoor on the Guildford, about the prettiest road out of London, as last season it was about the best done. With such a co-partner as Mr. Cooper there will be nothing to be desired. The Windsor will, we believe, have its old proprietary; and there is talk of an afternoon coach to Virginia Water, to drive down to dinner at the good hotel there, a ramble by the lake, and return by moonlight—a pastoral and pretty idea, savouring somewhat of love-making and 'spooning.' Mr. Charles Hoare will take the Tunbridge road as far as Sevenoaks, at least, and in all probability will have a partner. Mr. Hargreaves will be on the Portsmouth road again, and the Watford and St. Alban's will also be occupied.

The Road Club, too, is going to start a coach, not a public one, but for the use of the members of the Club; a good idea, which, seeing the road can boast of many coachmen, ought to succeed. There will be a professional whip, under or alongside of whom the junior members may sit and learn; and the coach will be available of course for race meetings and other popular gatherings.

The Quorn have had their share of sport, having had several long runs as well as some very sharp bursts. On Monday, December 10th, they met at Six Hills, found a good fox at Cossington Gorse, ran him by Ragdale, Shoby Scholes, Lord Aylesford's covert, past old Dalby Village, through Holwell Mouth, to ground at Clawson Thorns. This was over a capital line, and only a little more scent was wanted to have made it quite a first-class run. On Friday, the 21st, after meeting at Beeby, they found first at Scraptoft, and soon ran to ground; then went off to Botany Bay, where they found again, and went away at a most terrific pace, none of the horses having a chance with them, by Quenby, pointing for Baggrave, but here turned and just got back to Hungerton Fox Holes, fifty yards in front of the hounds. After this they found at Barkby Holt, and had a nice gallop of half an hour, and then went home. On Monday, the 31st, they met at Widmerpool New Inn, found in Curates Gorse, went away by the Broughtons, over the Smite, which proved a stopper to most of the field, as it was very wide just at this part; however, Mr. Ernest Paget was the first to have a shy at it, and fell in; then Tom Firr went next and got clean over; then Captain Smith (there is but one Captain Smith), and these were the only two who did jump it. Several got in, and some found a place to scramble through. In the meanwhile the hounds were running merrily over the fine country pointing for Holwell Mouth, but leaving that on the right, they went on to Clawson Thorns, where they ran to ground after a very enjoyable gallop of thirty-five minutes. Later on they found again at Lord Aylesford's covert, and ran until dark. On Friday, January 4th, they were at Baggrave Hall, and found directly in the Prince of Wales Gorse, and ran to ground at Car Bridge. Then they went to Barkby Holt, found in the first quarter, and went straight away, pointing for Queniborough, then turned, leaving Barkby village to the right nearly to Scraptoft, by Humberstone, over the brook which requires jumping, by Barkby Thorp, and then nearly over the same line again. Foxes lie out very much about here, and fresh ones kept continually getting up in front of the hounds, who kept running from one to another for four

hours, until it was dark and they were stopped. This was an awfully hard day for hounds, but a capital day's sport. On Saturday, the 5th, they had a forest day from Ratby Burrows, finding in Martinshaw Woods, and killed in the Out Woods after a good hunting run of nearly three hours. On Thursday, the 10th, they had a bye-day at Beeby, first drew Scraptoft, where they soon found, and were quickly away up to the turnpike road, where the fox was headed, then by Ingarsby, and another turn brought them back to Botany Bay, through the Coplow, and over the hills beyond, where the hounds slipped away from the field in a most remarkable manner over the big grass fields at a great pace, Captain Pritchard-Rayner and Tom Firr up to this point cutting out the work, until the former had a tremendous fall over some very high strong rails in the corner of a field. Then came Lord Grey de Wilton, who stopped like a good Samaritan to see if he could lend any assistance, Captain Ashton, and Archer the jockey, who likes a ride over Leicestershire, and Wells the first whip, the hounds still running on as hard as they could go, never giving the rest of the field a chance of getting up to them, on by Skeffington, through Brown's Wood and Tugby Bushes, and killed at Loddington Redditch; and just before they ran into him some of Mr. Tailby's field thought it was his hounds, until they found out their mistake, they having had a capital run with their fox from Glooston Wood. This was a capital run of one hour and five minutes, the cream of it being the last half hour from the Coplow.

Mr. Tailby met that morning at Slawston, and after killing a fox found in a turnip field before he had got on his legs at Hallaton Fallowfield, went to Glooston Wood, and found a fine old dog-fox, which they ran over the Keythorpe Road, down to the Noseley brook, which four men charged and cleared, a handy bridge letting up the rest, raced on past Rolleston covert, where there was a check which was much needed, as most of the horses were quite blown after galloping so fast for quite five miles; but it was a very short one, for Summers soon hit off the line, and away they went again over the Skeffington Vale, the stiffest line in Leicestershire, over the Uppingham turnpike road to Skeffington Wood, but in a large grass field up went the hounds' heads, and the run was at an end, for then they saw the Quorn crossing their line from Billesdon Coplow and running into a fox at Loddington Redditch, which all thought was the one they had hunted, and Summers had so fairly merited. The time of this run was forty-five minutes, the distance about nine miles, or seven from point to point. Mr. Tailby, Captain Hunt, Captain Davison, Mr. Logan of Langton Grange, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Kennard of Talbot House, Mr. Hay, junior, Mr. Underwood, on his grey (until he fell at the bottom under Skeffington), were well in front all the way.

But perhaps the best run of the season in the Shires up to the present time was with the Cottesmore on Saturday, January the 5th, from Ridlington. They first had a very fast spin over four fields to ground, and killed. After this they drew Wardley Wood, where they found directly, and came up and down those grassy mountains which are so trying to horses, over the Uppingham Road, through Quaker's Spinny, skirting Launde Wood, Owston Wood, through Whissendine and Ranksborough Gorse (immortalised in 'Baily' by Mr. Bromley-Davenport), to Cold Overton, thence to Knossington, Somerby, and Owston village, where the run was over. Never were horses more completely pumped and scattered all over the country, which was a very severe one, for not a single man got his second horse until quite the end, and then he was of little use to him. It was a hard job to get many of the horses home. The time was an hour and fifty-five minutes, and the distance not

far short of twenty miles. There was only a small field out, Lady Florence Dixie, and the Hon. Mrs. Fetherstonhaugh of Kibworth Hall, being the only two ladies, but most of them stuck steadily to the hounds throughout this very severe run, until one exhausted horse after the other fell out.

After an absence of two months Lord Spencer returned to England at the end of December, and put in his first appearance on New Year's Day at Buttocks Booth, where he was keen as ever; but he denied himself the pleasure of coming to Yelvertoft the next day, devoting himself to sitting in a stuffy court at Northampton as Chairman of Quarter Sessions. On this day, which was exceedingly foggy, the Empress of Austria came from Cottesbrooke, attended by Captain Middleton, who is her regular pilot, and accompanied by the Count and Countess Larisch, who are living at Guilsborough Grange, and their son and daughter, Prince Lichtenstein, who has often hunted from Wansford, Count Clam-Gallas, who was over in this country last year; but their first day was a very bad one, the fog being so dense as to take away all pleasure of riding to hounds.

The Pytchley, however, have had good fair average sport. On Saturday, the 5th, they met at Harrington, and this day was signalised by a succession of accidents. They found a real good fox at Loatland Wood, where half the field were left behind; run by Desborough over the brook to Rothwell, up to which point Mr. Foster, on his good grey, cut out the work. Here the grief began. In the first place, many fell into the brook in trying to ford it, Mrs. Edward Corbett and another lady both falling into a hole in the attempt, as did also Major Orred; then Mrs. Oliver had a bad fall on the road which stunned her, and she was conveyed on a chair fetched from Desborough to Colonel Arthur's brougham, only to find that vehicle already converted into an ambulance containing Count Clam-Gallas, who had had a bad fall and broken his jaw, and in which he was taken home to Cottesbrooke. The Empress rode remarkably well, and a more truly bold, and at the same time really graceful rider to hounds has never been seen. There are many ladies in the Midlands who perhaps ride quite as boldly, but, as regards grace and elegance, she surpasses nearly all of them. All who had the pleasure of his acquaintance will lament the loss of Admiral Jones of Braunston. He was out with the Pytchley at Misterton on Wednesday, the 9th, and died on Friday, the 11th. A kinder-hearted man never lived, nor a keener sportsman, nor a bolder rider. He had ever a smile on his face, and a pleasant word for everybody. He will be much missed in the Pytchley county.

Mr. Oakeley's friends will be glad to hear that he is fast recovering from his accident, and that on most days he has been out in his phaeton with a second pair of horses in reserve, to coach him about the roads, so that he may see all that he can, which perhaps is quite as much as a good many others.

The Atherstone had a very good run on Saturday the 12th from Meriden Shafts, and a capital gallop on Friday the 18th, when they met at Brownsover after the Rugby Hunt Ball, finding at Coton House, and after running for a few fields to ground near Newton, and bolting him over the railway and the brook, which stopped a great many, they ran on by the side of the river at a great pace past Lilbourne, by Catthorpe Towers, to ground at Swinford.

Good sport seems to continue with the Vine, so that it was evidently a good day for that country when Mr. Beach engaged Jack West. On Thursday, January 3rd, they met at Hannington; found in Great Deans Wood, and killed in the open after a very good fifty-five minutes; then found another in the same wood, and after some good hard work in covert, got him away over

the open by Hannington Scrubbs, and over the downs towards Sparrowbills, where they lost, owing to an enthusiastic person taking off his cap and hollooing, so that West could never get the hounds to settle again. When will some people learn that in hunting, as on other occasions, that silence is golden? This was a good hunting run, one hour and twenty minutes, the last part of it being very fast.

The run of the season with Baron Rothschild's staghounds was on Thursday, January 10th, from Mr. Mead's farm at Dunton. The deer set its head straight for the Bicester country, going over Main's Hill and Marston Field, between Granborough and North Marston, under Hogshaw Hill, by Fullbrook farm up to Fine Moor Hill in the Claydon Woods, a wild district of old pasture land, where the draining tile has not yet superseded the deep ditches and natural water-courses of the country, and where the blackthorn knows how to grow. Horses did not get much of a pull in the sticky clay rides of the Claydons as the hounds rattled through those strong coverts. From thence the line was by Doddershall Wood to Ham Green, crossing Wotton Park and over Brill Hill to Boarstall, where the deer was safely taken, having made a point of between fourteen and fifteen miles. We are unable to give the exact time taken in doing the distance, as the time-taker was unfortunately thrown out, but we shall not be very far wrong in putting it at five-and-forty minutes up to the Claydons, and about one hour afterwards. This was as fine a run as ever was ridden to, and the bit of woodland gave the chase a flavour of fox-hunting.

It is some time since we have said anything about Mr. James Dear's harriers, which have had very good sport during the past month. On Thursday, the 3rd, they met by special invitation at Crawley Court, near Winchester, the newly-built handsome residence of Mr. Adam Kennard. Nearly one hundred horsemen were out, and with their first hare they had a capital fast and straight run over the best open country of thirty minutes, concluding with a 'cap' for Tom; and then another little gallop back to Crawley Court, where the hares were too numerous. Every one was much pleased, and said that if the first run had been with the foxhounds how the Hursley Magpie would have chattered. This country is eminently adapted for harriers, and we shall not be much surprised if Mr. Kennard, who has hunted in several countries and knows what good fox-hunting is with the V.W.H. and other first-rate packs, does not take to the harriers as keenly as Lord Gardner did when he lived in that neighbourhood.

On Saturday, the 5th, they had as good a run of one hour and fifty-five minutes as could be seen in any country after meeting at Ewhurst Park, and finding one of the right sort at Mr. Halton's covert. Foxes are said to be so short in the H.H. Tuesday country that we should not now be surprised to hear of a good many, like Messrs. James Martin and Tom Blake, preferring a good day with Jack West to walking about all over the country in search of a fox.

The H.H. have had some good runs this month. On the 7th of January they had a wonderful day's sport. The meet was at Chawton House; they found in Monk Wood, and ran very fast to near Kingsley, where they lost. They found again in Isington, and ran by Binstead, Ludcombe, leaving Wyke Copse on the right, to near Worldham, through Monk Wood, and killed in Peck Copse, after a most capital run; nearly all the horses had quite enough. The scent has not been good this season in covert; the scarcity of foxes in the Tuesday's country is greatly to be deplored, and there are other parts of the country that Mr. Deacon cannot draw till the coverts have been shot over, which curtails his cub-hunting and interferes with his drawing the first

part of the season. He is most popular, and if these disadvantages should cause him to retire, no other Master would be likely to undertake the country.

The Hambledon have been doing very well. On Boxing Day they had a very good run, from Orchard Copse over the Southwick country. On the 5th of January they met at Owselbury Down; they chopped a fox in Durwood, and whilst they were performing the funeral rites a fox was hallooed away. They hunted him round two fields to the plantation at the end of Durwood, when they set-to running, going through Presnau Park, Rabbit's Copse, and Sailor's Wood to Beacon Hill without a stop. Here they checked in a thick fog, but, by a most judicious cast of Mr. Long's, they hit him off and went down Beacon Hill, over the Exton and Warnford Flat to Arnold's Rows, on to Brookwood, over Brookwood Park; then on the left, leaving Jones's acre on the right, by Major's Farm to Beacon Hill, where the scent failed, and so finished the day. The first part of the run the pace was first-rate; the last part beautiful hunting. On Monday, the 21st, they met at Waterloo Inn, when they had the finest day's sport of the season over the Waterloo country to ground in forty minutes, and another run afterwards from Chalton Gorse.

A correspondent sends us the following from the Tedworth :—'Since my 'last letter to you the Tedworth have sustained a loss it will indeed be hard 'to replace by the death of Lord Ailesbury, who, besides owning both the 'hounds and horses, has been by far and away our most liberal supporter, 'though of late years he did not appear in the hunting-field. No doubt you 'will do his memory fuller justice elsewhere in your periodical.—On Thurs-'day, the 3rd January, Sir Reginald Graham, when hunting the New Forest 'Hounds himself, had an exceptionally good run. The meet was that 'excessively pretty and popular one, Bratley Water. Drew the lower part 'of Slufter blank, but when the hounds were in the gorse outside a long, 'low, dark, wiry-looking customer was viewed stealing along the centre side. 'A halloo soon brought up Sir Reginald and his darlings, but the covert 'being a remarkably bad bit of scenting ground, enabled pug to get well on 'his legs before little "Matron" hit off his line in the open, when the pace 'soon let us know that we were in for a good thing. Facing the hill and down 'Pugpits, through Boldre Wood to the ruin, turning sharp to right he again 'faced the open and skirted Pugpits (outside which up jumped a fresh fox, 'but the bitches stuck to the hunted one), over the Southampton Road, by 'Ocknell Pond, nearly up to Fritham, turning to the left through Ocknell 'Wood, at the bottom of which we nearly left a well-known sportsman '(whose holloo is notoriously the best in the forest or neighbouring packs) 'in a bog; along Broomy, past some strong earths, which our gallant fox 'never deigned to try, on to Broomy Lodge, below which some sawyers 'turned him; over a five-acre grass field, into which the leading hounds had 'jumped before pug had negotiated the opposite fence. Now came a race 'back to Slufter, up to which point the hounds could not gain a yard. A 'tougher fox never yet held his own so bravely; through the enclosure over 'Bratley Bridge, past the Woodman's cottage, through Mark Ash into 'Boldre Wood, where they pulled down, exactly in one hour and a half, 'a varmint whose equal one rarely meets. Just as the hounds got hold of 'him, a fresh fox got up in the midst of them, but he slipped away unscathed 'and almost ignored. Under the circumstances, I almost wish the hounds 'had blooded themselves with him, and left our old friend to have given us 'another dart when he had got over his stiffness. Besides the Master, Lord 'Eslington, Sir Claude de Crespigny, General Parker, Messrs. Esdaile,

'Brouncker and Son, Juck, &c., had the good fortune to enjoy this undeniably 'excellent run.'

We are happy to record an instance of appreciation of talent and good conduct, gratifying alike to the givers as to the recipient, in the fact that Richard Roake, huntsman to the South Berks Hounds (Mr. Hargraves), was on Christmas Eve last presented at Reading by a few friends with his portrait, life size, on a favourite hunter surrounded by hounds. This speaks volumes for Roake, as did the testimonial presented to him some seven years since when leaving the Pytchley, and deserves a notice in our columns.

The unexpected death of the Marquis of Ailesbury, for though he had passed the allotted span the illness that carried him off was brief and sudden, leaves a gap among the old generation of racing men that can be ill supplied. An ardent lover of the Turf, a kindly hearted and honourable gentleman, following racing for his amusement, and with none of the craft and secretiveness characteristic of some of his equals, Lord Ailesbury had his fair share of the Turf's good things. The foundation of much of his success was laid in Bribery and Cantine, the former a moderate mare, but who gave a son to her owner that has left a very decided mark in the Stud Book. Though Lord Ailesbury won the Cambridgeshire with Knight of the Shire comparatively early (1852) in his Turf career, his great year was undoubtedly 1860, when the little known and little trusted St. Albans began by winning the Metropolitan, and a fortnight later the Chester Cup, and suddenly sprang into notice as a Derby favourite. It is an old story now how a Newmarket preparation and the hard ground at Chester broke the son of Bribery down; how he was carefully nursed through the summer, and how effectually he turned the tables on Thormanby on the Leger day. Nearly as old, for Turf celebrities have but a butterfly existence, is the story of Lord Ailesbury's second bid for Derby honours with that most provoking of all equine things, a rare good horse, but who had to meet another about a pound better than he was. Those who saw the Derby and Leger of '66, and the head-and-head race in each event of Lord Lyon and Savernake will not easily forget it. The latter, own brother to St. Albans, was supposed to be a delicate horse, if we remember rightly—at all events he failed as a four-year-old, for he was nowhere in the Ascot Cup. That was a great Stockwell year that of '66. The placed horses in the Derby were all his sons, and the two first fought their terrific battle over again on the Town Moor; 'Emperor of stallions' indeed. In 1872 Lord Ailesbury had a very speedy filly in Cantinière, a daughter of Stockwell and Cantine, who, if she had not turned roarer, would in all probability have made a greater name, and later her half-sister Aventurière proved herself a wonderfully stout mare when in the Cesarewitch of 1874 she defeated the Truth gelding and upset one of the greatest certainties of modern times. Lord Ailesbury was, as we have said above, a genial and kindly hearted man. If he could do a friend or acquaintance a good turn, he would. 'You had better have a bit on mine,' he would often say when he thought his chance was a good one. No one could ever accuse him of winning a big stake with none of his friends on. As a landlord and an employer he was beloved and respected, and he has gone to his rest amidst every expression of loving remembrance and regret.

Though not much individually known in the hunting world out of Surrey, Sussex, and Hants, in which counties he passed all his life, we have to record the death of William Summers, who died at Ryde on the 12th, aged seventy-nine, a real good old-fashioned huntsman, and one of Nature's gentlemen into the bargain. He began his hunting career with Mr. Waring's stag-

hounds, and on leaving them went, in 1839, to Mr. Richardson at Findon, and hunted his hounds with Champion, now the huntsman of the Southdown, as his whip, until 1848, when he went to Mr. John Napper of Ifold, who succeeded Mr. Richardson for three seasons. Then in 1850 he went to the H.H., when Mr. Knight of Chawton House was Master, and the sprightly evergreen, Jack Hickman, was one of his whips. In 1852 he went to Mr. Stanley, who brought the North Devon Hounds with him into Hampshire, and with him and his successors, Mr. Tregonwell, and Mr. Standish, he passed nearly the rest of his life in the big unsatisfactory Hursley Woods, and, by way of a finish, he followed Mr. Standish into the New Forest as kennel huntsman. Such a good father could not well fail to have good children, and his sons George, Alfred, and Richard, with the Surrey Union, the Hursley, and Mr. Tailby, are now well known in the hunting world.

'Poor old Tom Day is also gone at last.' A wonderful man has been old Tom Day, as he was always called since first known to this country, and we believe was grey-headed when he came to Quorn eight-and-thirty years ago. His death was hastened at last by a fall downstairs, through his eyesight having failed; though many were the croppers he has had in the hunting-field over oxers and other obstacles, he escaped them all without injury, and in his last fall, which happened about a fortnight before his death, he fractured two ribs and received a thorough shock to the whole system, which proved too much for him at his years, having attained the ripe old age of eighty-six in November last. Tom Day began life with a sporting parson when a boy, and went from him to Lord Scarborough as second whip, before reaching the age of twenty, and remained there about three years. He then went to Mr. Osbaldeston as whip, and from him to Sir George Sitwell as first whip, and was after a time promoted to the post of huntsman. On leaving this place we find him again whip to Mr. Assheton Smith, at Tedworth, with whom he remained about three seasons. His next move was to the Warwickshire, as first whip to old Will Boxall, and, on the latter's leaving, Tom Day filled his place successfully for five or six years. From there he came to Quorn as huntsman, and hunted this county eighteen years, first under Mr. Hodgson, then Mr. Greene, of Rollerton, and lastly with Sir Richard Sutton. At Sir Richard's death the country was divided, Mr. Tailby taking that part which is called High Leicestershire, and engaged Tom Day to get a pack together for him, which he did, and hunted them for one season; and after this retired from the hunting field, settling himself quietly down at the village of Quorn, where he remained to his death. A singular coincidence occurred which is worthy of remark. The Quorn Hounds were advertised to meet at Ratcliffe, on the Wreall, the day of Sir Richard's death, and the same was the fixture on the very day of the death of old Tom Day.

It is with much regret that we hear of the scarcity of foxes in portions of these two Ridings as reported in the 'Yorkshire Post' of the 14th ult. There is no wonder that the Hon. A. Pennington gives up the Holderness country at the end of the season from the manner in which he has been treated in this respect. The pheasant fever has increased at a rapid rate, and the fear of losing 7*s.* per brace has had a wonderful effect on the owners of some coverts. In former days a man who wilfully killed a fox was held up to execration, and he might well hide his head; these improperly called sportsmen are increasing, and chuckle rather than otherwise in their misdeeds. What has become of the old blood of the county? It must have run out and been badly crossed.

One of our contributors, who has written frequently against the selfishness of many sportsmen of the present day, illustrating his theory by the desire of

many to be each 'the man' in the cricket field, hunting field, shooting and other sports, calls our attention to a fair example of the truth of his argument. Last week the Mayor and Corporation of Basingstoke invited the Vine Hunt to breakfast at the Town Hall, as is their annual custom. The papers state that the ground being iron-bound by frost few, if any, hunting men turned up. Mayors and Corporations do not frequently recognise the utility of field sports; and surely it is bad taste, when a hospitable invitation has been given to all--to say nothing of its being a wretched compliment to the Master—that Mr. Beach, and his huntsman and hounds, and a very few friends were left to represent the Vine Hunt.

Mr. Hume Webster has during the last year formed a very first-class breeding stud at his residence, Marden Deer Park, Caterham, Surrey; he has spared neither trouble nor expense in getting together thirty mares of the purest and most fashionable running blood, and he has hired from Lord Wilton the stallion See Saw, who has already made a great name for himself, as nearly everything by him can race, which is not to be wondered at, considering the Buccaneer, Melbourne, Defence and Touchstone blood that flows in his veins. Soapstone by Touchstone has been purchased, and is also there, and we have no doubt he will be well patronised, as a finer bred horse does not exist, and any one who saw his two yearlings that were sold by auction last season for 1000 guineas each, would be proud to produce such specimens of the thoroughbred. Mr. Hume Webster is not a racing man, and has formed this stud for his own amusement; he intends selling all his yearlings without any reserve whatever, in the same manner as Lady Emily Peel, Mr. Waring, Mr. Combe, the late Baroness Rothschild, &c., &c. Marden Deer Park is admirably adapted for breeding, as it is in chalk, and there is an abundant supply of the purest water. The estate comprises thirty-six acres of land, which is partly upland and partly meadow, so that the mares and young stock can have a change of pasture when desired; but what is of still greater importance, in our opinion, is that instead of the old-fashioned plan of having cramped paddocks of two or three acres, there are fields of thirty acres, where the youngsters have plenty of space to learn to gallop, and thus prepare themselves for what they are expected to do in the future; in fact, this admirable plan, which has been adopted by Count Lagrange and other breeders in France, has proved itself to be of the greatest advantage to our Gallic neighbours. The services of John Griffith, jun., have been secured as stud-groom; he is brother to Joseph Griffith, of Cobham, and when we say they are the sons of Mr. Chaplin's stud-groom, John Griffith, we can but say that all the arrangements are such as to ensure a breeding stud that will be second to none, and we heartily wish it the success its spirited owner deserves.

Just as we are going to press we hear with much regret of the serious illness of Mr. W. H. Cooper, who is at present on a visit to Lord Fitzhardinge at Berkeley Castle. A few pages back we alluded to the prospects of his welcome reappearance on the road again, and we trust that nothing will hinder our anticipations. His recovery will be looked for by his numerous old friends and acquaintances with much eager hope and pleasure.

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"As our readers are aware, the labours of the 'Van' driver are manifold, and take him forth beneath the summer sun and the winter's blast, so that, robust and vigorous as he is, he is fain to hail with joy any fresh protection from the rigours of our climate, and often has it been his lot to thank Messrs. Benjamin, of Conduit Street, in his heart for the comfort their inventions have afforded him. Yet until now there has been one garment wanting—a complete waterproof in which a man could ride with comfort, and at last it has appeared in 'The Pytchley Spencer.' Other coats have partially waterproofed us, this one renders us as impregnable as Plevna from head to heel. It is best described as a coat and leggings made in one, so simple that it can be put on or taken off on horseback in a moment, so light as to be no inconvenience when worn, and when folded, so small as to be easily strapped to the pommel of the saddle. In it we can set weather at defiance; and whether cantering our cob across Newmarket Heath, or waiting for a fox to break on the bleak heights of the Hemploe or Billesden Coplow, bid the elements do their worst, for we are safe."—BAILY'S MAGAZINE, Nov. 1st, 1877.

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